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THE GRAMOPHONE AND THE SINGER

(Continued)

By HERMAN KLEIN

The Supremacy of Mozart—II.

"THE MAGIC FLUTE."

IN an article by the Italian writer, Alfredo Casella, recently published in the *Christian Science Monitor*, the following passage occurs: "It is interesting to see the extent, in the case of Wagner, to which symphonism introduced into the theatre hurt it [the latter]. Whereas Mozart did just the opposite and introduced the theatre into the symphony, into chamber music, even into oratorio; with the result that the operas of Mozart seem younger than the dramas of Wagner. The fusion, dreamt of by the latter, of *all the arts* (my italics) is a pure Utopia which has already disappeared from the horizon. In the musical theatre music alone reigns." This is eminently true; and it is here that we find the secret of the permanence and the perennial attraction of an opera like *The Magic Flute*, which depends for nine-tenths of its charm upon the undying melodies of Mozart. The remaining tenth is quite adequate for the story and char-

acters invented by the egregious Schikaneder, though, to be just, one has come across librettos even more difficult to understand than his.

I believe the present generation flatters itself on being the first to appreciate Mozart's operatic swan song at its true value. In a footnote in Mr. Francis Toye's clever book, "The Well-Tempered Musician" (lately published by Methuen and Co.), I read that it was "an amateur performance of *The Magic Flute* at Cambridge (and also one of Handel's *Semele*) that enabled us to realise the potentialities, more or less unrecognised at the time (*sic!*), of each of these masterpieces." I can assure my youthful friend that so far as the Mozart opera is concerned he is quite mistaken. Whatever its "potentialities" may precisely signify, there can be no question that the general meaning and the hidden subtleties of the plot (such as it is) were as aptly appreciated in the last century as they are in this; while the music was far more beautifully sung by the artists of that

epoch than it is to-day. When I first heard *Il Flauto Magico* in the 'seventies, with Tietjens as Pamina, Ilma di Murska as the Queen of Night, Sinico as Papagena, Santley as Papageno, Bettini as Tamino, and Foli as Sarastro—a cast never to be replaced or matched!—other leading singers of the company did not disdain to fill the small secondary parts, such as the Tre Damigelle, or the Tre Geni, and so complete a perfect ensemble. The opera, thus performed, was invariably given to a crowded and enthusiastic house, and not only enjoyed but understood.

Still, this had not always been the case. *Die Zauberflöte* was first produced at Vienna on September 30th, 1791; three months later Mozart died, leaving behind a triumphant success for his music, but a very bad name for Schikaneder's libretto. Ten years afterwards the directors of the Paris Opéra wanted the former and refused to have the latter at any price. What did they do? They effected a compromise by producing under the title of *Les Mystères d'Isis* a *pastiche* containing musical plums from the whole of Mozart's operas and even fragments of Haydn's symphonies! This precious mixture had such a big success that it held the stage in Paris for several decades; and, indeed, with the exception of some performances in 1829 by a German troupe, the opera in its original form was never heard in France until it was produced at the Théâtre-Lyrique in 1865, with a new translation, under its present title of *La Flûte enchantée*. Meanwhile, in Austria and Germany the puerilities of the plot had never formed an obstacle to its popularity, seeing that the original text was German, and that Mozart, in wedding his wonderful music to it, had achieved the amazing feat of moulding a masterpiece as purely German in its nature and essence as the *Nozze di Figaro* and *Don Giovanni* are purely Italian. In no stage translation, be it Italian, English, or French—and I have heard them all—does the music of *The Magic Flute* sound so sublimely beautiful and grand, so supremely expressive, as does the German to which it was composed. For this reason, and for this alone, I would under all circumstances advise my readers to lend a willing ear, and even to accord their final preference, to gramophone records of this opera sung in the German language. Fortunately, they comprise the pick of the whole series that have come under my notice.

Thanks to latter-day demand, *The Magic Flute* has been almost, if not quite as, extensively recorded as either of the other favourite operas. (The overtures and instrumental excerpts I have left, of course, to the able pen of Mr. Francis E. Terry.) The first available item is Tamino's opening air, *Dies Bildniss ist bezaubernd schön*, sung in German by Leo Slezák (Polydor 65773) and in English by Tudor Davies (H.M.V., E.401) as *Loveliness beyond compare*. The former is hard and strident, sustained with effort;

the latter easy, but throaty and indistinct, not so good altogether as the air with the flute, *O voice of magic melody*, which occupies the reverse side. After these the Queen of Night claims attention, and, I may add, arouses conflicting emotions, her records being, like the curate's egg, good in parts. The two great airs must, for convenience sake, be considered together. No. 1, sung in Italian by Frieda Hempel, *Infelice, sconsolata*, (H.M.V., D.B.331), does not rise to the dramatic heights that Christine Nilsson and Ilma di Murska used to touch; but the runs are exquisitely neat and the staccato notes in *alt* delightfully clear and musical. No. 2, *Der Hölle Rache*, given in German, reveals stronger declamation together with the same faultless florid singing, and therefore is the finer effort of the two (H.M.V., D.B.365). Recording as perfect as this would, perhaps, have done greater justice to the rendering of the same airs (on one disc, Polydor 65634) by Sabine Meyen, an excellent high soprano, though not yet the finished vocalist that Frieda Hempel is. She starts with the recitative, *O zittre nicht, mein lieber Sohn*, but the tone is not well managed—it continues rough and is marred by scratchiness and blasting, while the runs sound hurried and anxious. Much better altogether is the *Hölle Rache*, more grandiose and regal in style, with a superb climax in the loftier regions. No. 1 is also carefully sung, but without distinction or character, by Evelyn Scotney (H.M.V., D.1035), and No. 2 by Luella Melius (H.M.V., D.A.723), who transposes it down to E flat and shines most in her staccato passages. Both these are in Italian. Perhaps the latest recording of the Queen of Night airs is by Maria Ivogün (Polydor 85310), the same disc containing them both in full, and sung in German. It compares favourably with the best of the others, alike for tone, dramatic accent, and brilliancy of vocalisation. The staccato runs sparkle brightly and are well in tune. Any inequality in the declamatory passages is entirely due to the "pinching" of the more acute vowels, and that is a fault from which scarcely a single one of these Central European artists—even the most distinguished—can be pronounced wholly free.

The delicious quintet, the trio, and the finale of the first act, alas! are missing. All that we have in compensation from this scene is the ever popular duet, *Là dove prende*; or *Bei Männern welche Liebe fühlen*, whereof I can cite four capital examples. The Italian one by Emma Eames and her husband, Emilio Gogorza (H.M.V., D.K.121), was probably made some time ago, but it could scarcely be beaten for smoothness of *legato* and accuracy of intonation. One hole only can I pick in the rendering, and that is the pause made by the soprano on the B flat—merely because it happens to be a high note—in the cadence towards the end. This un-Mozartian reading is not to be found either in the admirably-blended and balanced version by Lotte Lehmann and

Heinrich Schlusnus (Polydor 72932), or in the very tasteful and bright one by the same baritone with Selma Kurz (Polydor 85301)—both such pleasing records that it is hard to choose between them. The German artists unquestionably have the right tradition in this matter, as can be perceived, moreover, in the authoritative reading of two other fine singers, Emmy Bettendorf and Friedrich Schorr (Polydor 65646). The balance here may be less perfect, because Schorr's full voice is of vast sonority, but when he moderates its power and gives Emmy a chance with her captivating warble, the effect is charming enough.

The second act brings us straightway to the sacerdotal surroundings of Sarastro and his good priests of Isis, whose benevolent task it is to overcome the evil machinations of Astrifiamante, the Queen of Night. Both of his noble bass airs are recorded in welcome profusion, the first in all four languages. They form, truly, the most magnificent pillars of Mozart's imposing musical structure, and gramophonists will find them not unworthily represented. Robert Radford's *O Isis and Osiris* (H.M.V., E.78) recalls his voice at its freshest and strongest, resonant and telling down to the deepest note of the compass. Marcel Journet (H.M.V., D.A.259) spreads his amazing breadth of tone with the most exemplary diction over the phrases of the French version, known as *Isis, c'est l'heure où sur la terre*. Paul Bender (Polydor 62304) is a shade less impressive because in *O Isis and Osiris* the salient notes lie a trifle low for him. But the gem, in spite of a piano accompaniment and a "vintage" that must date from twenty years at least, is the Italian *Grand' Isi, grand' Osiri* left us by the inimitable Pol Plançon (D.B.657). I could not listen without emotion to my old friend's beautiful singing of this air. The record possesses in a wonderful degree the singular individuality and charm of timbre that were peculiar to his voice, and I shall henceforth regard it as a rather precious souvenir. Scarcely less glorious, however, is his delivery (reverse side) of the more familiar *Qui sdegno*, which I am happy to be able to describe as, in my opinion, very nearly on a level with the finest vocal recording of to-day. Anyhow, it is a perfect model for all basses to utilise if they are wise. Journet, singing in French (*La haine et la colère*, D.B.613) had to hurry to get in both verses, but, bar the tempo, his is a splendid specimen too. Paul Bender, singing in German (*In diesen heil'gen Hallen*, Polydor 62304), profits by singing only one verse and yet achieves a very unequal effort, the falling-off in resonance towards the end being very marked. Alfred Jerger, also in German (Polydor 62368), has the right kind of voice for this air and a first-rate low E; but he rolls out phrase after phrase as if it were an old drinking song, and in so doing uses altogether too much *portamento*.

The common Teutonic fault just mentioned is the sole blemish on Elisabeth Schumann's tenderly expressive rendering of *Ach, ich fühl's* (or *Ah, lo so*, Polydor 65811), that little *chef d'œuvre* of tragic grief wherein Pamina pours out her soul over a Tamino whom she imagines to have lost for ever. (When I was a youngster, people were willing to travel miles to hear the famous Tietjens sing this, and hers was indeed a very beautiful and touching performance.) Another, by Delia Reinhardt (Polydor 72776) drags it a little, notably in the slow scale passages, and lacks the highest degree of elegance requisite for perfection—a big word, I know. Yet a third approaches this more nearly than either. It is by Zenaida Jurjevskaja (Parlo. E.10278), who spins her enchanting tone slowly, securely, without the slightest dragging of the tempo, not so intense in feeling, perhaps, as faultless in execution; on the whole a first-rate record. Finally, there remains Papageno's immortal song with the bells, simplest of ditties if you like, but lovable as the simple bird-catcher himself. We have it traditionally correct in German by Friedrich Schorr (*Ein Mädchen oder Weibchen*, Polydor 65646), who gives it the necessary swing and lively lilt, with a manly, robust tone in the bargain. The Italian reading (*Colombo o tortorella*, Columbia D.1522), by Ernesto Badini, makes a too solemn thing of it, being much too slow and sustained. All one can say is, here is a fine singer out of his element; and yet—shades of Santley, Graziani, Cotogni, Del Puente, and a few more that I could name!

"IL SERAGLIO."

This was the opera which the Emperor Joseph II. satirically complained of as being too *lively* for Viennese ears (not too "lovely" as the printer made me say in my December article). Although it was written to a German book, I employ the Italian title because it is the shortest. When it was produced on July 12th, 1782, Mozart was only 26, and the world hailed it as a masterpiece. For every reason it ought to be heard oftener in this country. The excellent Beecham revival at His Majesty's promised to lend it a new lease of life, but, unfortunately, the stimulant soon lost its force, and the only reminder of that event preserved by the gramophone is Robert Radford's admirable record of the two airs for Osmín (H.M.V., D.114), known respectively as *When a maiden takes your fancy* and *Ha! My pretty brace of fellows*. The doleful self-pity of the one contrasts effectively with the crisp, clean-cut vivacity of the other, while the voice shows no sign of wear and tear. The two songs for Constanze are done on a single disc by Sabine Meyen (Polydor 65747); and of these the *Ach ich liebte, war so glücklich*, if far from easy, is still child's play compared with the stupendous *Martern aller Arten*, one of the most elaborate florid airs that Mozart ever

wrote. Both pieces are marked by neat execution and natural agility, and the customary big cut in the second still leaves a crowded disc. The same exacting aria is also sung in German by Maria Ivogün (Polydor 85303) with a stricter adherence to the text and more musical charm; and in Italian (*Che pur aspro il cuore*, H.M.V., D.B.331) by Frieda Hempel, who likewise conquers its difficulties with unfaltering ease. Blonde's two airs, *Durch Zärtlichkeit und Schmeicheln* and *Welche Wonne, welche Lust*, prettily sung by Elisabeth Schumann (Polydor 65580), complete the slender selection.

"COSÌ FAN TUTTE."

Another of Mozart's Italian operas—very nearly the last of them—and among the finest. Why not, then, heard more frequently? Because Da Ponte for once contrived a rather tiresome plot—story and characters of the kind that we now call overdrawn or improbable, or both. In England, too, we don't know how to translate the title without making it misleading. The word *tutte*, being the feminine of "all," indicates that it is here the girls, not the men, who are the perennial flirts. Literally, therefore, it should be "The girls all do it"; only that suggests the title of a comic song rather than a Mozart opera, so I prefer to leave it as it is. Anyhow, Isidora and Dorabella are a couple of charming coquettes, and their waiting-maid, Despina, is a delightful embodiment of seventeenth century intrigue and mischief. The latter's two principal airs, *Una donna a quindici anni* (or *Schon als Mädchen*, Polydor 19132) and the still better known *In uomini, in soldati*, are recorded on one disc by Vera Schwarz, who imparts the needed sprightly touch to both. A prettier tone and greater distinction is, however, discernible in Lucrezia Bori's rendering of the second of these (H.M.V., D.A.132). The famous tenor song, *Un'aura amorosa*, finds a sound, traditional interpreter in Hermann Jadlowker (Polydor 72663), though I confess that this artist arouses in me more admiration for his technical ability than the quality of his voice. *Et voilà tout!*

MISCELLANEOUS OPERAS.

On the other side of the record just mentioned is a still more notable effort—nothing less than the excessively trying air from *Idomeneo* (*Nöch tönt mir ein Meer im Busen*) written nearly ten years earlier than *Così fan Tutte*, but marvellously foreshadowing the later style in its elaborate florid treatment of the voice parts. This is, perhaps, the most exacting and arduous piece ever written for a tenor, and Jadlowker really does it tolerable justice, which is saying a great deal.

To a still earlier date (1775) belongs *Il Re Pastore*, only remembered to-day for the poem of Metastasio and the soprano air, *L'amerò*, with violin obbligato, which Melba used to sing with Joachim. Her record of it (H.M.V., D.K.112), done with Kubelik, forms a pleasant souvenir, but that is all. More up-to-date

is that of the Hungarian soprano, Hüni-Mihactek (Polydor 65636), who possesses a wonderfully pure tone and displays it with equally pure art. In fact I fancy I prefer hers to Maria Ivogün's (Polydor 85311), though there is really nothing to be said in the way of adverse criticism against this either.

Less known, but still more beautiful, is the air *Ruhe sanft, mein holder Leben* (Greta Stückgold, Polydor 19238), from another early opera called *Zaide*, which I happen to know Sir Thomas Beecham had serious thoughts of reviving a few years ago. It rather resembles in character *Il Seraglio*, the production of which seems to have eclipsed it for ever. Nevertheless, it was mounted at Frankfort in 1866, and maybe one day we shall hear it in London.

Lastly, there is another half-forgotten opera entitled *La Clemenza di Tito*, produced at Prague three weeks before *The Magic Flute*, and which, like the works just previously referred to, appears to be saved from total oblivion by a solitary piece. In this instance it is the lovely air *Non più di fiori*, whereof Kirkby Lunn some years ago made a splendid record (H.M.V., D.B.517). I recommend it to the notice of all true Mozart lovers. And the opera itself—a miracle of grace, replete with charms of every type, yet never heard in this country!—was composed, written, scored, rehearsed, and placed upon the stage all within a period of eighteen days. Three months later, or a little over, the incomparable master lay buried in an unknown—some say a pauper's—grave!

TWO OPERA BOOKS.

Even with the preliminary aid of scores and gramophones, helping on the musical side, it is hard to take in all the salient features of an operatic representation—as eye and ear combined ought to take them in. As a rule a great deal is missed; but there will be less fear of this for amateurs who have been wise enough to possess themselves of Mr. Paul England's book entitled "Fifty Favourite Operas," just published (12s. 6d. net) by George G. Harrap and Co. They will find in it everything that is worth knowing about almost every opera that is worth hearing—remarks about the composer, a vivid account of the plot, references to the music—all written in an easy gossiping fashion that is the very antithesis of pedantry. The plan of the book is original and consistent without being in any sense cut-and-dried. One feels throughout, "here is an experienced cicerone who knows his subject from a to z, and who can therefore save me an infinity of search and study, as well as prevent me from passing unnoticed the beauties and the points that might otherwise escape me." It follows, naturally, that Mr. England has succeeded in writing not only a useful compilation but an exceedingly interesting book.

With regard to his opinions, which he allows

unusually copious sway for a volume of this nature, the student ought perhaps to be a little cautious. It is obvious that the author has his likes and dislikes; he expresses both freely and can even be apologetic at having to include certain operas that he does not much care for. I am sorry I cannot see eye to eye with him in some of these cases—notably *Les Huguenots*, the only one of Meyerbeer's operas that is described in full (by the way, there ought to be a separate index for the "favoured fifty"). I cannot, for my part, understand why Mr. England's positive adoration of Wagner, whose works he writes about so sensibly, and his equally wise admiration of the Italian school, especially Verdi, should be incompatible with any sort of tolerance for Meyerbeer or even the Rossini of *Guillaume Tell*. For him there exists no sincerity here, no honest emotional expression; all is artificial; the great scene of the Benediction of the Daggers is "mere violence and volume of sound," and "here, at least, Meyerbeer deserves the hardest things that have been said of him. Yet," says Mr. England, "it contains perhaps the best melody that Meyerbeer ever wrote, of a kind which finds an echo in Gounod and Saint-Saëns" (oh, disgrace!); and then, on the very same page, we are told that melody was "always Meyerbeer's weakest point" (*sic!*). But, apart from a curious viewpoint here and there, or an odd omission now and then (for example, Lilli Lehmann was a fine Norma, but why on that account leave out Tietjens, who was by far the finest Norma that came after Grisi?), this is eminently a book to buy and keep close at hand. The illustrations, too, are of the highest interest. (N.B.—There is a slip in the maiden name of Mozart's sister-in-law, the phenomenal soprano for whom he wrote the music of the Queen of Night in *Die Zauberflöte*. It was not Josepha, but Aloysia Weber.)

Different in plan and size—also somewhat in character—from the above volume is the new and enlarged edition of the late Gustav Kobbé's "Complete Opera Book" (price 15s.), published by G. P. Putnam's Sons. I shall, however, express no preference for either; I like both. The latter takes in double as many operas and quotes over 400 of their leading airs and motives; hence its justification of the adjective used in the title. It is ably written; the various operas are grouped under the names of their composers; the stories are concisely told; and the music gets its full share of the general analysis. I have detected only one or two errors worth mentioning. For instance, when the *Di quella pira* in *Il Trovatore* is transposed down from the key of C major to that of B flat, it ought scarcely to be asserted that the high C descends to a note "a tone and a half lower." A welcome feature of this edition is the new section, consisting of modern Russian and English operas, contributed from the able pen of Mr. F. Bonavia. HERMAN KLEIN.

Fairy Gold

The Editor has sent a message of regret for failing in his review of the January records which should appear in this issue. The weather has tended to hamper communication between Jethou and the London office; but, far more than that, other pre-occupations have prevented any contribution on gramophone matters. The Editor's novel *Fairy Gold*, which is appearing serially in the *Evening Standard*, has involved the writing of about 175,000 words in three months; and those of our readers who are novelists will appreciate the amount of concentration which such an undertaking demands. One of them, who is *not* a novelist, wrote the other day to express a fear that in his devotion to THE GRAMOPHONE, Mr. Compton Mackenzie might lose sight of the more important work upon which his career is pivoted, a fear which is not likely to be justified, but which none the less evokes a responsive gratitude when so kindly expressed. Nearly all our readers, however, seem to understand that the Editor can only spare a certain amount of time at irregular intervals for answering letters and writing articles on gramophone subjects; how much of it he would like to devote to them may be easily judged from his past contributions to this paper.

Stop Press

A review of the H.M.V. *Scottish List* is unavoidably held over till next month.

Pathé and Actuelle records (including a 'cello Concerto in D major of Haydn) and Zonophone records have arrived too late for review.

The Handel Concerto issued by Parlophone and reviewed by "K.K." on p. 441 was, it transpires, originally written for Oboe and String Orchestra, probably at Hamburg in 1703, and at the request of some publisher was re-written for 'cello by Handel himself.

The Sunday Afternoon Concerts of the National Sunday League, which are taking place throughout January, February, and March, are having a great success at the Palladium. Sir Landon Ronald (see p. 426) and the Royal Albert Hall Orchestra, seventy strong, are being assisted in some very attractive programmes by well-known gramophone artists—Sapellnikoff, Carrie Tubb, May Harrison, Madame Makushina, and Arthur de Greef. It is a great chance for Londoners who have been missing orchestral concerts on Sunday afternoons this winter.

TO SINGERS: TAUGHT OR UNTAUGHT

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MOZART



NO. 21 FRITH STREET, WHERE THE MOZARTS
LODGED IN 1764.



STATUE OF "MOZART AS A BOY," IN THE
LUXEMBOURG MUSEUM, PARIS.

A SILVER shield, swung down the heavy rain,
Blurring that sky where huddled clouds were blown,
Turning Mozart's five "friends" homeward again,
While he passed to his pauper's grave, alone.

His baby lips a queen had stooped to kiss;
His were the hands that touched the hearts of kings;
The mind transmuting into harmonies
The half-dim fantasies of lovely things
We guard within our hearts, his was that mind.
Over the keys of a tall harpsichord
His fingers, as a child, had strayed, to find
The clear, pure cadences between them stored.
This was Mozart, dying alone at night,
Whose music fills the ageing world with light.

—Margaret Marshall.

NOTES on SOME RECORDS of MUSIC by W. A. MOZART

(Continued from page 315)

Compiled by FRANCIS E. TERRY*

K.498. *Trio No. 2 (sometimes called Op. 14, No. 2) in E flat, for Clarinet, Viola, and Pianoforte*.—Completed August 5th, 1786. This, like most of Mozart's trios, seems to have been intended for performance at more or less informal music parties, and it may be conveniently noted at this place that the trios tend to be simpler than the quartets, less sophisticated in mood, but are, at their best, uniquely spontaneous in emotion, and the actual writing is often subtler and more ingenious than appears at first hearing. This trio has been played by Sammons (violin), Tertis (viola), and St. Leger (pianoforte), and recorded by Vocalion on three sides (D.02064 and D.02015), one movement to each side, the first movement being backed by the first movement of the Trio in E major (*infra*). The practice of playing the clarinet part on a violin is frequent but unfortunate; the music is largely a study in the effects which can be obtained by contrasting the tones of a wind instrument and stringed instrument of similar compass; in the recorded version the lack of this intended contrast is exaggerated by the tendency of the gramophone to minimise the difference in tone of the different stringed instruments; it is, however, a pleasant and interesting exercise to play the records with the score, imagining the beautiful effects which one would hear if Mr. Sammons were transformed into a clarinetist. The first movement (andante) has one short cut near the beginning (bars 34 to 46); it is, in effect, in sonata form, and gives an impression of compactness and of an interfusion of strength and grace (largely due to the simple but effective part-writing). The second movement is a minuet, emotional and magnificent, with a trio which is mainly a study in tonal contrast of the instruments; the only repeat (apart from the da capo, which is written out in full) is that of the first section of the

minuet. The last movement (allegretto) is a rondo; there is a cut of four bars (81 to 84) and from about bar 111 the movement is abridged considerably; but these cuts are quite harmless. Besides the effect of playing the clarinet part on a violin, there are other points in which the recording is not so satisfactory as that of the other two recorded trios, and my collaborator, who is well acquainted with this work, finds these records decidedly dull; but, despite such criticism, these are notably beautiful records for those whose principal means of access to music is through the gramophone. This work must not be confused with the Divertimento in the same key for three stringed instruments (K.563) mentioned in Goodwin and Tabb's catalogue of small scores.

†K.516. *String Quintette (No. 3) in G minor*. Composed May, 1787. This is probably the most celebrated, the most perfect, and (in some ways) the most elusive of Mozart's recorded chamber compositions. It has been played by the old L.S.Q. and Alfred Hobday and recorded by Columbia on three records (L.1362-4). The first movement (allegro) occupies the first two sides; it is in sonata form; the exposition, uncut and unrepeat, takes up the first side; the rest of the movement is included in the second side by omitting the second subject in the recapitulation (bars 167 to 222), an omission which is partially redeemed by the fact that there is a brief allusion to the second subject in the coda; the beauty of this movement is easier to feel than to describe; its mood is so finely spiritual as to be very difficult to apprehend; speaking in terms of mere human experience (which are grossly imperfect means of describing spiritual states) it may be said to resemble a soul tempered by grief and resignation to a fine edge of quiet happiness and a perception of unembodied graces moving through the more tranquil aspects of nature; the mood is very constant throughout the movement, but contains infinite internal variety; this effect is obtained by mature but unostentatious art; among the means employed may be mentioned the simple nature of the material, its apparent unpremeditation, the way in which the second subject when first heard sounds very different from the first subject, but is soon shown to be closely related to it, and the full but concise manner in which all the implications of the material are explored and connected. The second movement is a minuet and trio which con-

* 'Ἀλλὰ τὰντα μὲν, ἣν δ' ἐγώ, καὶ μετὰ Δάμωνος βουλευσόμεθα, and forthwith despatched gramophone, records, and the draft of this and the third instalment of this article to a friend whom I will hereafter refer to as "my collaborator," and of whom I will only say that in all respects except knowledge of matters gramophonic (of which she was completely ignorant) she is much better fitted to deal with the subject of this article than I am, and that her natural bias tends to the opposite of my own, so that her criticisms have helped to eradicate my personal prejudices from the article. There was only time for her to go through four or five of the paragraphs (mainly the symphonies) in detail, but the general tendency of her criticism has influenced me in revising even such paragraphs as she barely looked at. I remain solely responsible. In playing the records for this instalment I have departed from the combination mentioned on page 306 by also using sometimes an Astra No. 4 and sometimes a Columbia No. 7 (the latter with Lifebelt).

tinues the same mood in a more massively tragic manner; it occupies the third side; the repeats of the minuet are observed; the repeats of the trio are not observed. The third movement (*adagio ma non troppo*) occupies the fourth side; it is in modified sonata form (without development); only the recapitulation is played (starting at bar 38); in this movement the rhetoric of sadness is employed, but with sincerity, and the mood is in keeping with that of the first movement but more direct and explicit, and it is a profoundly moving piece of writing. The last movement is a beautiful but more or less ordinary Mozartian rondo which, to prevent it from jarring with the foregoing movement, is preceded by a fairly long *adagio* introduction; this *adagio* introduction occupies the fifth side; it is as grave as the preceding movement but less poignant (a little reserved), gains speed and fluency as it proceeds, and breaks naturally into the rondo; the rondo (*allegro*) is compressed into the sixth side by omitting the first 118 bars and also a passage of 20 bars ending 12 bars from the end of the piece; no repeats are observed. The worst effect of the cutting is that undue prominence is given to the *adagio* introduction to the last movement; this introductory section ought to be considerably less than half the length of either the preceding *adagio ma non troppo* or the succeeding rondo (when played in full and with repeats observed); on the records it is nearly as long as either of them, and this and the necessity for turning the record give it the appearance of an independent movement, thus badly distorting the proportions of the piece. The playing and recording are both extremely good; some contrapuntal effects are rather difficult to hear, but that is only to be expected. When everything is said and done, these remain indisputably the best Mozart records. This work was followed by four German songs, a sonata for four hands, and then the Musical Joke.

†K.522. *A Musical Joke (for String Quartet and Two Horns)*.—Composed in June, 1788. This has been recorded by Polydor on three ten-inch records (62436-8). It is in the first instance a comic depiction of a ludicrously bad musical performance, but the composer also takes the opportunity to introduce buffoonery of a kind which is not strictly satiric. The first movement (*allegro*) is in sonata form and occupies the first side (repeat of exposition observed); this movement is rather in the spirit of Swift's "Polite Conversation," a depiction of the reiteration at some length of the most commonplace imaginable phrases, the skill consisting in making this reiteration amusing and not merely tedious. The second movement, a minuet and trio, occupies the second side (no repeats except the usual *da capo*); the minuet is of the heavy type and in the second strain of it Mozart has inserted the most obvious piece of "bad grammar" in this composition, the

horns playing in the wrong key; the trio starts as a parody of the "running" type of trio which might be used to contrast with a minuet of the "heavy" type, but he then goes on to make different instruments play against each other two, three, and four notes to the beat. The third movement (*adagio cantabile*) occupies the third and fourth sides, the break occurring at the beginning of the recapitulation (bar 37); this movement is more subtle than the others; it is written for string quartet alone and seems to be a parody of a type of slow movement frequently used by Mozart himself, that in which the first violin rhapsodises in the manner of a soprano in a tragic opera; the movement starts as though it were going to be completely serious, but one soon begins to notice comic features, such as banal phrases (some which are banalities still in use at the present day), inconsequent transitions, and incongruous bits of accompaniment; at the end Mozart has written out a cadenza for the first violin in which, on the dullest possible material, he plays first in quavers, then in semiquavers, then in demisemiquavers, then shows off his double-stopping, and then runs to the top of his compass, from which he drops suddenly to a plucked note at the bottom of his compass. The fourth movement (*presto*) occupies the fifth and sixth sides (both repeats on the first page of the score observed); the break is at the beginning of the recapitulation (bar 215); the beginning of this movement is similar in character to the first movement; then there is a short piece of formal fugato which manages to sound delightfully inane; shortly after Mozart has the bright idea of making the horns trill on a single note for eight bars continuously while the two violins play platitudes in canon; after a while the violins take eight bars to play a downward scale in isolated quavers separated by quaver-rests; after a bit more fooling to the like effect, the five other instruments repeat one chord in one elementary rhythm for sixteen bars while the first violin skips formally about in arpeggios; further foolery, and then the horns hold a chord for sixteen bars while the strings talk ponderous nonsense; this ends the fifth side; the sixth side is similar except that, in the long trill for horns, instead of a single note, the first horn trills at the top of its compass while the second horn trills two octaves below at the bottom of its compass, a highly ludicrous effect which cannot properly be captured on the gramophone. Playing and recording seem very good and clear. This work does not sound by any means so obviously ludicrous as would appear from my description of it; indeed, when I played it to one of my friends, who reckons to appreciate Mozart, he went into raptures and said "How fresh, how delicate, how truly Mozartian"; in fact, the ludicrous effects are put together with a great deal of skill and grace. Before playing these records the gramophonist is advised to re-read "Mac Flecknoe."

This work is partly also a satire on the methods of the lesser composers of an elder generation; those who will replay the Brandenburg Concerto No. 3 of J. S. Bach will realise how, in the hands of less able men, this style might degenerate into something of which the first movement of the Musical Joke would not be a wholly unfair parody. This work was followed by two songs and then *Eine Kleine Nachtmusik*.

K.526. *Sonata for Pianoforte and Violin, No. 17 (called Op. 8, No. 1) in A major*.—Composed August, 1787 (immediately after *Eine Kleine Nachtmusik*). This sonata has been recorded by Arthur Catterall (violin) and Hamilton Harty (piano) and recorded by Columbia in six sides (L.1494-6). The music is polished and carefully simple in style, and mature and rather quiet in expression, with touches of deeper but unruffled sensibility in the slow movement. The first movement (*allegro molto*) is in sonata form; the exposition (unrepeated) occupies the first side, the rest the second side. The second movement (*andante*) is also in sonata form and is like a quiet, intimate but coherent conversation between the two instruments; the exposition (unrepeated) occupies the third side, the rest the fourth side; the development is expressive and interesting and the recapitulation is finely varied. The third movement (*presto*) is an ordinary Mozartian rondo and occupies the fifth and sixth sides, the break coming at bar 185; the first repeat is the only one observed. The playing is good and sensitive, with insufficient expression, but free from any wrong expression; the recording is good except that on some machines it is almost impossible to hear the pianoforte against the violin, while on no machine is the pianoforte sufficiently distinct; this is the more unfortunate in that Mozart intended the pianoforte to be, if anything, the more important instrument.

*K.527. *Overture to Don Giovanni*.—This opera (which is next in chronological order to the Sonata in A) was completed all but this overture by October 28th, 1787; the overture was written on the night of November 3rd; the first performance was on November 4th. It is the most operatic of Mozart's operas; it obtains nearly every effect which is possible in this form of art; almost every type of human character is depicted and every sort of emotion is explored; the musical numbers include almost every form from the most simple aria to the most elaborate scena, including one air resembling early Verdi and another in the manner of Handel; at one moment the music depicts the light banter of a gallant and his manservant, at another the mystery of a cemetery at night, and there are also passages where the music is undramatic in its absolute beauty; considered separately, many of the numbers are of the profoundest interest and loveliness, but taken as a whole the opera is somewhat

disjointed and must be considered simply as the most dazzling and stimulating tour de force which was ever accomplished for the entertainment of mankind. It is to an entertainment of this kind, brilliant and intensely "operatic," that this overture is the fitting prologue; it raises the most pleasing anticipations of what will follow when the curtain rises. It is in sonata form, preceded by an *andante* introduction of thirty bars; the introduction is founded on the music connected with the supernatural machinery which, in the fable of the opera, provides the requisite spice of gothic awe for this entertaining concoction. The overture has been extremely well conducted and recorded by Dr. Weissmann and Parlophone (E.10130); another very good record is by Seidler-Winkler and Polydor (62414); both being good, I can only say that personally I have a slight and not very decided preference for Dr. Weissmann's interpretation. Polydor 62458 is not good. In each case the turn of the record is at the end of the exposition section (bar 120).

K.542. *Trio No. 5 (sometimes called Op. 15, No. 2) in E major, for Violin, Violoncello, and Pianoforte*.—Composed June, 1788 (immediately before the Symphony in E flat). This is the most famous of the pianoforte trios. It has been played by Sammons, Tertis, and Ethel Hobday and recorded by Vocalion on three sides (D.02064 and D.02091), one movement to each side, the first movement being backed by the first movement of the Trio in E flat (*supra*). The music has been slightly arranged so as to permit of the violoncello part being played on a viola; from the point of view of recording this is probably an advantage, as it avoids the difficulties which seem to attend the attempt to record the combination of violin, violoncello, and pianoforte, and enables all the instruments to be brought properly into focus, so to speak. The first movement (*allegro*) is in sonata form (repeat of exposition section not observed); in the recapitulation the latter part of the first subject and the whole of the second subject are omitted (bar 172 to fourteen bars from the end—for convenience of counting it may be added that the exposition occupies exactly 100 bars); this movement has a sense of spaciousness and well illustrates Mozart's use of the pianoforte. The second movement (*andante grazioso*) is uncut and very simple, arising entirely out of one air. The third movement (*allegro*) is a rondo and is a good deal cut (bars 74 to 82 and 128 to 208). This trio is simple, delicate, and perfect of its kind; it is difficult to describe music apparently so slight yet so compellingly beautiful; among other things, it is a good example of Mozart's power of endowing the pianoforte with a human voice. The recording is supremely good, and the cutting not so annoying as might have been expected. The three records comprising this and the E flat Trio (*supra*) should be in

every collection. The second movement has also been played by Catterall, Squires, and Murdoch and recorded by Columbia (L.1521); this is not so satisfactory as the Vocalion version, but the record is worth getting on account of the interesting minuet from Beethoven's very early pianoforte trio (Op. 1, No. 3, in C minor) on the back.

*K.543. *Symphony (No. 39) in E flat*.—Completed June 26th, 1788. This symphony is in a sense more Haydnish than either of its two companion pieces; it completes and perfects that orchestral technique in the development of which Haydn had had such a great part; it epitomises that side of Mozart's genius which most influenced Haydn's later works; and, in mood, it is very level-headed and avoids those intenser and more intimate emotions by which Mozart is most obviously distinguishable from his great contemporary; on the other hand, it has a certain subtle graciousness and sophisticated simplicity which differentiates it from Haydn, and the orchestral colouring has a refinement and suavity not to be looked for in Haydn; it is largely a study of orchestration of the mellifluous and melodic rather than brilliant type, masculine (but not specially virile) in mood, and more "augustan" than most of Mozart's works. It has been conducted by Weingartner and Weissmann and recorded by Columbia (L.1563-5) and Parlophone (E.10393-5) respectively; in each case the work is complete on six sides, the first two movements occupying two sides each and the third and fourth movements occupying one side each. The first movement is an allegro (in sonata form) preceded by an adagio introduction; in the Columbia version the break is at the end of the exposition; in the Parlophone version the break is at the beginning of the second subject (bar 97) of the exposition; in neither case is the exposition repeated; in the Columbia version the conducting is very steady, a true reading, never irritating, but perhaps a trifle dull; in the Parlophone version the adagio is taken very decidedly too slowly, the allegro perhaps a little too fast, the interpretation is pleasing in many passages, but the general effect is much less authentic than that of the Columbia version, and, after several playings, becomes a little irritating; the general effect of the Columbia recording is fairly true, but particular instruments (notably the lower strings, the flutes, and the drums) are too often inaudible, even in passages where they are of individual importance; the recording of the Parlophone version is most admirable, the separate parts being nearly always clearly audible, and the instruments faithfully portrayed and clearly differentiated, but in some loud passages for full orchestra the balance is unsatisfactory. The second movement (andante) is in quasi-sonata form (without development); in the Columbia version the exposition (repeat at bar 8 observed, that at bar 27 not observed) and first eight bars of

recapitulation (to bar 75) occupy the first side, and the recapitulation (starting at bar 68) occupies the second side (this repeat of bars 68 to 75 is very sensible and corresponds to the repeat of bars 1 to 8); in the Parlophone version there are no repeats and the break occurs in the first subject of the recapitulation (at bar 87); the conducting of the Columbia version is extremely good; the conducting of the Parlophone version is also good, but inclined to be "precious" and to give too much importance to the effect of the separate phrases and too little to the general effect of the movement; the recording of the Columbia version is generally very clear and good and is particularly excellent in the important and difficult passage for wood-wind which occurs for the first time at bars 53 to 57; the general level of the recording of the Parlophone version is even clearer and perhaps better, but it fails notably at the above-mentioned passages for wood-wind, which are really the test place; this movement is noteworthy for its gracious reserve, quite different from the emotional quality of the slow movements of the two companion pieces. The third movement, a vigorous minuet and attractive trio, is well conducted and recorded in both versions, but the Parlophone version seems to be the better. In the fourth movement (allegro) the conducting of the Columbia version shows splendid energy and a fine grasp of the effect of the movement as a whole, and the recording is good: the conducting of the Parlophone version is fine and subtle in some passages, but lacking in force, with too little grip of the general effect; the recording is very good, probably better than that of the Columbia version. Comparing the two versions as wholes, one would say that the Columbia version is inclined to be dull, that some details are not sufficiently brought out, but that on the whole it portrays the effect and intention of the symphony most admirably; the Parlophone version is more brilliant and exciting, but not a true interpretation; I distinctly prefer the Columbia version, but can understand a contrary opinion, particularly as the Columbia version requires a very good machine to do justice to it. The third and fourth movements have also been conducted by Toscanini and recorded by Victor (6303), a record which has received quite unmerited praise; the minuet is too slow, over-accentuated and becomes grotesque, and the trio is taken with a sentimentality which is quite unMozartian, so that the general effect of the third movement is made to resemble Rossini played by a sea-side band: the fourth movement has no such prominent faults, but lacks both the steady grip of Weingartner and the subtlety of Weissmann; this record is, however, very clearly recorded. The third movement has also been conducted by Fritz Busch and recorded by Polydor (*65868); the interpretation of this record is on the slow side, not very exciting, but distinctly authentic and Mozartian; the recording is good, but not

wonderful ; but the chief merit of this record is that the back contains the one and only recording of the Priests' March from the Magic Flute (*infra*). In the four weeks between completing this symphony and completing the one in G minor (*infra*) Mozart composed a little march for orchestra, a little easy sonata, an introductory adagio for a string quartet, a sonatina for pianoforte and violin, a trio for pianoforte, violin, and violoncello, and a canzonet for two sopranos and bass.

*K.550. *Symphony (No. 40) in G minor*.—Completed July 25th, 1788 (but orchestration amplified by addition of clarionets at a later date). This is the most lyrical of these three symphonies ; it is extremely regular and lucid in form, the several sections of the movements being well contrasted and clearly divided from each other. It has been conducted by Dr. Weissmann and recorded by Parlophone (E.10366-8) on six sides ; it has also been conducted by Mr. H. Greenbaum and recorded by Vocalion (K.0105105 and 6 and 05112 and 3) on seven sides. The first movement is in sonata form : in the Parlophone version the exposition (unrepeated) and development (ending bar 165) occupy the first side and the rest of the movement the second ; in the Vocalion version the exposition is repeated and occupies the first side, the rest of the movement occupying the second. The second movement (andante) is also in sonata form and in both versions the exposition (unrepeated) occupies the third side and the remainder the fourth side. The third movement (minuet) occupies the whole of the fifth side of the Vocalion version, but only the first two-thirds or so of the fifth side of the Parlophone version. The last movement (allegro assai) is in sonata form : in the Parlophone version the first subject (ending bar 70) of the exposition (which is not repeated) is at the end of the fifth side and the rest of the movement is contained on the sixth side ; in the Vocalion version the exposition (repeated) occupies the sixth side and the rest of the movement the seventh. The eighth side of the Vocalion records is devoted to a pretty Rigaudon by Rameau which is beautifully played and recorded. The conducting of Dr. Weissmann is good on the whole ; he takes the first movement too slowly and is too diffident ; he makes a good effort to capture the poetry of the second movement, but it eludes his grasp, as he is again too diffident, too meticulous over the phrasing of individual passages, and has not a steady enough grasp of the movement as a whole ; his minuet has a strong and good rhythm ; his last movement is distinctly good ; his principal fault throughout is being slow and hesitating : the conducting of Mr. Greenbaum is thoroughly honest and sensible, but is a little pedestrian (a much more pardonable fault than misinterpretation), lacking in subtlety, and with some faults of rhythm : his version of the second movement is not good. The recording of

the Parlophone version is usually extremely good ; it is clear and massive, with good contrast both between the different instruments and between different gradations of force ; the bass is particularly clear, the contrapuntal effects sound very well, and in many passages the orchestration is displayed to advantage ; but the tone is sometimes too massive ; my records very quickly developed a tendency to "blast" for a couple of bars in the third movement at the end of the trio ; and there are one or two other more or less unsatisfactory places. The recording of the Vocalion version is of very fair average standard, clear, with no definite faults, but with few positive merits. The music is delicate, but strongly articulated, more contrapuntal than appears at first hearing, and the second movement is profoundly poetic, giving the impression of freely roaming meditations of a rich and essentially purposeful and constructive mind ; the first and last movements provide good examples of the most typical sort of contrast between first and second subjects.

*K.551. *Symphony (No. 41) in C major*.—Completed August 10th, 1788 (immediately succeeding the Symphony in G minor). This symphony has been called the "Jupiter," but not by Mozart, and this name is apt to be misleading as to the character of the piece ; it is true that it is more in the "grand manner," often more obviously rhetorical, and certainly more elaborate than its companion pieces, but the label is not satisfactory. It has been conducted by Albert Coates and by Heidenreich and recorded (in each case on seven sides) by H.M.V. (D.942-5) and Polydor (*69655-8) respectively. The first movement (allegro vivace) is in sonata form ; in the H.M.V. version the exposition (repeated) is given on the first side, the rest on the second side ; in the Polydor version the exposition (not repeated) and the first half of the development (to bar 161) is given on the first side, and the rest on the second side ; the H.M.V. version is played too fast throughout, gives an effect of ludicrous and nonsensical hurrying in certain passages, but gets a stimulating (perhaps too stimulating) effect out of some of the contrasts and dramatic passages ; the Polydor version preserves a better tempo, though too slow, does not perhaps make quite enough of the contrasts and dramatic effects (though usually fairly adequate) is never nonsensical and is often very true and beautiful. The second movement (andante cantabile) is also in sonata form : in the H.M.V. version the exposition is repeated and the third side ends just before the second subject in the repeat of the exposition (bar 28) and the rest of the movement is given on the fourth side ; in the Polydor version the exposition (not repeated) and development (ending bar 59) occupy the third side and the recapitulation occupies the fourth side ; the two versions are contrasted in the same way as in the first movement, only more so ; the H.M.V. version is

brilliant, effective, too fast, and sometimes degenerating into nonsense; the Polydor version is always sensible, sometimes inadequate, frequently beautiful. The third movement is a minuet and trio and occupies the fifth side of both versions; the H.M.V. rendering is splendid, but loses touch with the dance rhythm; the Polydor version is an admirable demonstration of the combined strength and loveliness of this movement. The fourth movement (*allegro molto*) is in sonata form with a decided contrapuntal element and an extended coda; in both versions the exposition (repeated) occupies the sixth side and the rest of the movement the seventh side; the very clear and vigorous H.M.V. rendering sounds admirable at first hearing, but one grows tired of its continual brilliance and finds its clarity somewhat fallacious in that it is often difficult to distinguish the particular instruments among the general bustle; the Polydor version is infinitely subtler, generally sufficiently vigorous, and one finds in it a real clarity due to the fact that the conductor understands the music. Coates seems to be quite out of sympathy with Mozart and unduly captivated by the name "Jupiter"; Heidenreich seems to be an able person (not a genius) who understands Mozart, but is a little too gentlemanly. Technically the H.M.V. version has some admirable points; it is at once clear and massive; the drums are surprisingly well recorded; it will sound effective on almost any gramophone, but actually the tone of the instruments is distorted in the direction of undue clarity and hardness and this, together with the strange pace at which this version is played, makes it difficult to appreciate the beauty of the orchestration. The Polydor version sounds less clear, fails somewhat in the more massive effects, there are places where particular instruments come out into undue prominence for a moment, and there are gramophones which will not do it proper justice; but on the whole the orchestration (and particularly the contrasted tones of the individual instruments) is more faithfully portrayed than in the H.M.V. version. On the whole this symphony is too massive and intricate to be suitable for gramophonic recording. The eighth side of the H.M.V. version is devoted to the *Impresario Overture* (*supra*); the eighth side of the Polydor version contains two movements from the "Burger als Edelmann" of Johann Strauss. As to the general character of this symphony it may be said that it bears a relationship to the *Symphony in G minor* (*supra*) somewhat resembling that of Beethoven's Fifth *Pianoforte Concerto* to his Fourth. The only other composition of this August is a war song; in September Mozart wrote ten canons and a *divertimento* in E flat for three stringed instruments.

K.564. *Trio No. 7* (sometimes called *Op. 16*) in G, for Violin, Violoncello, and Pianoforte.—Completed October 27th, 1788 (next after the *divertimento* in

E flat for three stringed instruments). This has been played by Sammons, Tertis, and Ethel Hobday and recorded by Vocalion (D.02150 and K.05174) on three sides, one movement to each side; it has, like the *Trio* in E major (*supra*), been very slightly adapted to enable the violoncello part to be played on a viola, but it has not been cut at all. This trio is similar in character to the *Trio* in E major (*supra*), but lighter, more decidedly happy and is a much slighter work; this is due partly to the shortness of the movements (which enables them to be recorded uncut) and partly to the character of the first movement, which has none of the spaciousness of the first movement of the *Trio* in E major (*supra*). The first movement (*allegro*) is in sonata form (repeat of exposition section not observed). The second movement (*andante*) is a simple, quiet, and very beautiful air with simple variations; the only repeat observed is that of the first section of the air. The third movement (*allegretto*) is a rondo which keeps so close throughout to its first simple melody as to give rather the impression of being another air and variations; none of the repeats are observed: the writing is in some ways more subtle than may appear at first hearing; there is a pleasant piece of fugato-writing towards the end. This slight piece seems to bring one very close to the sociable, affectionate, simpler side of Mozart's character; though the serious and learned musician in him is somewhat suppressed in this class of composition, nevertheless it is in a different world from the dances and other "pot-boilers" which he wrote to order, and rings sincerely. No better introduction to Mozart could be found for the unlearned gramophonist; the more austere sophisticated sort of musician may consider it rather trifling, but it requires a great composer to say simple things with so much truth. The recording is excellent; in a few passages where the pianoforte has not much to say it may be a little too subdued, but it is always sufficiently in evidence when of much importance. The third movement is backed by a rendering by Tertis of a *Barcarolle* by Tchaikovsky which I do not care for, but which my collaborator, who plays the viola, praises very highly.

(To be concluded.)

F. E. TERRY.

THOUGHTS ON MUSIC

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FROM

THE GRAMOPHONE, 58, Frith St., London, W.1

ROBIN LEGGE in the *Daily Telegraph* says:—

"A most desirable book . . . Many of the criticisms drawn together under one roof, as it were, are of utmost value, the very crystallisation of criticism. The author has done his work well indeed."

ORCHESTRAL RECORDING

By JOHN F. PORTE

THIS article has little or no connection with some remarks I have made previously on orchestral interpretations for the gramophone. There I was concerned with the various conductors' readings of the scores. Now I want to look for some real orchestral records. I was prompted to write this article by the signs of orchestral illusions which I detected in remarks made by gramophonists in defending the records of *Entry of the Gods* from the *Rhinegold* (Wagner), as conducted by Sir Landon Ronald. They missed my point about Albert Coates being miles beyond Sir Landon as a Wagner operatic conductor, because the record referred to is thought to be so fine. Now I have had that record for a long time, and regard it as a veritable trap for the unwary gramophone lover of orchestral music. It is excessively brilliant in tone, and this provides a thrill that can throw us all off our balance; even the experienced symphony concert devotee is caught. But I hold that Mr. Compton Mackenzie's ideal of the real orchestral record is the only possible one, if we are ever to have the orchestral sense cultivated in our own homes. That is, *we must hear the orchestra as if we were in the corridor of the Queen's Hall*.

It must be remembered that the gramophone has created and is training a large proportion of orchestral music-lovers who have at best very limited opportunities of frequently attending symphony concerts. If they like the *Entry of the Gods* kind of record they are taking the dope of false gods—acquiring an orchestral sense which isn't one. I hope this is quite clear. There never was a performance of the *Entry of the Gods* such as this unduly famous record gives us. It sounds like a few players boxed up in an empty parochial hall, and is as utterly misleading and ridiculous as are the vocal records in which the singer deafens us and the piano or orchestra sounds miles away. The latter fault was largely remedied in the H.M.V. Wagnerian records; but try D.B.439. On one side of this record we find the closing of *The Valkyries*, sung by Clarence Whitehill, with orchestra conducted by Albert Coates. On the other side is *Amfortas' Prayer* from *Parsifal*, with the same singer, but no conductor is mentioned. The first-mentioned side is an English recording with large orchestra claiming as much attention as the singer. The other side is an American recording, and gives the old, bad method of bringing the singer in the drawing-room, while the important orchestral part sounds away out in the garden. I object to this utterly misleading kind of "Opera at Home," although it may suit devotees of operatic "stars."

The gramophone has undoubtedly trained a large number of music-lovers to appreciate orchestral music, but I guarantee that it has actually produced many with a peculiar *sense* of the orchestra. That is the danger. There is now the *gramophone* symphony orchestra, feeling which is not that of the *real* symphony orchestra. These brilliant *Entry of the Gods* affairs do more harm than good. The orchestral results of the Gramophone Company's latest recordings do not affect this article in regard to existing records. And let me say now, that a large amplifier or sound chamber is necessary to do justice to orchestral recordings. I used an H.M.V. Horizontal; but designs like E.M.G. and Dousona are good. I distrust machines which have a lower cabinet space that crushes a generous allowance for the sound chamber. Fibre needles are, to my mind, hopeless for orchestral records. The man who really likes them thus cannot mentally hear the orchestra; what he really likes is pleasant drawing-room gramophone music. I remember talking to a maker of fibre needles. He admitted having no experience of hearing music, but knew a lot about record wear. Far too many gramophone lovers appear to take too much notice of the machine. They can never forget that a gramophone is playing and are something like the prosaic people who don't believe in fairy-tales. May I give a few records that can help the gramophone listener to a truer sense of the orchestra?

The chief mistake that most of the recordings show is in having a small number of strings. Somebody said that strings record well, so off go all the sheep and cut them down. In consequence we miss the sweep of the strings of a big orchestra, while wood-wind peeps out with a marvellous distinctness that is nice, but not true to the symphony concert. I like all the Wagnerian records conducted by Albert Coates, for there are many moments, especially in the *Twilight of the Gods* closing scene, when they *do* sound as if a big orchestra were playing. Not always, I fear, but there are those thrilling moments. The Tchaikovsky *Fifth Symphony in E minor* (H.M.V.) is the same. There is often the feeling of a big orchestra at work, and as it is still one of the very finest symphony recordings, I suppose one must consider it a very serious necessity to a record library. Listen carefully to the first disc of Beethoven's *Ninth Symphony* (H.M.V.). This has none of the superficial brilliance of *Entry of the Gods*, but it has the curious sense of a big orchestra, with *massed strings*. I cannot intrude with all possible examples; but there are the old Columbia records of the Milan Symphony

Orchestra. These were made by "50 performers." The cut version of Tchaikovsky's *E minor Symphony* sounds as if an orchestra of the size stated were playing, but they all get in one another's way and the result is muddled. The H.M.V. issue of Berlioz's *Symphonie Fantastique* is one of the finest and most hopeful compromises between orchestra and gramophone; and the same company's issue of Elgar's *In the South* is a modern instance of failure to do justice to either. Orchestral recording is a tremendously difficult matter to perfect, yet some of us are still concerned about pianoforte recording. Drake gamely finished his game of bowls when he was informed that the Spanish Armada was sighted. I admire his determination to finish out the tussle on the bowling-green, but the Armada was the big job to be done. So with pianoforte and orchestra recording.

A rather interesting old record of the orchestra is Columbia, L.1011. This contains the third movement of Rimsky-Korsakoff's *Antar* symphony, as conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham (who prefers the early *Antar* to the much more mature *Scheherazade*). It sounds something like a symphony orchestra, but the concluding brass chords are the outstanding impression. They sound as if they were up in their places at the back of the orchestra at a symphony concert, and do not appear just inside the gramophone. The sonority and balance is almost true. The march from Borodin's *Prince Igor*, on the reverse side, is practically as good. I do not say that the *Antar* extract is a better gramophone record than the *Entry of the Gods*; I have only referred to it as one containing a glimpse of the orchestra. Misleading orchestral recordings should be avoided even more than bad interpretations and bad playing, for they strike at the very roots of appreciation of the orchestra. The feeling for the sound of the orchestra is largely a matter of experience in hearing it. The judging of interpretations depends upon a realisation of the ways and outlooks of composers, and upon a knowledge of musical history. For instance, to hear the *Entry of the Gods* record and then say that it does not sound like an orchestra, is the result of orchestral concert going. But to hear the records of Weingartner's interpretation of Beethoven's *Eighth Symphony*, and then ask if this heavy-footed rendering can really be the composer's favourite "little" symphony, would show an appreciation of Beethoven's feeling in this particular work, and a knowledge of the spirit of the "classical" period before posterity invested it with tradition and a stiff, plaster cast. Bad playing will be recognised by gramophonists comparing their own records, using, say, the following as high standards of playing:—

Berlioz's *Symphonie Fantastique*, conducted by Rhené Baton (H.M.V.).

Beethoven's *Ninth Symphony*, conducted by Albert Coates (H.M.V.).

Rimsky-Korsakoff's *Coq d'Or Ballet Music*, Parts V. and VI., conducted by Albert Coates (H.M.V.).

Borodine's *Prince Igor Ballet Music*, conducted by Albert Coates (H.M.V.).

Elgar's *Second Symphony, Rondo (Third) movement*, conducted by Sir Edward Elgar, O.M.

Mozart's *G minor Symphony (No. 40)*, conducted by Dr. Weissmann (Parlophone).

Beethoven. Any of the symphonies or overtures that are conducted by Dr. Weissmann (Parlophone).

Rimsky-Korsakoff's *Scheherazade*, Part 4, conducted by Albert Coates (Columbia).

Scriabine's *Poem of Ecstasy*, conducted by Albert Coates (Columbia).

Mozart's *Marriage of Figaro* overture, conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham (Columbia).

Strauss' *Don Juan*, conducted by Dr. Richard Strauss (Columbia).

Beethoven's *Seventh Symphony*, conducted by Weingartner (Columbia). (Note.—This suits Weingartner's heavy style, and is not conducted by Dr. Weissmann on Parlophone).

Mozart's *Magic Flute* overture, conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham (Columbia).

NOTE.—The Hallé Orchestra is very fine, but I do not care for their present recording conductor. I am trying to keep a very high standard of playing before me. This attitude also rules out Holst, who while extremely capable, does not get the magnificent results of the conductors listed above.

Incidentally, the gramophonist can then be his own critic when attending an orchestral concert, and ignore the stock remarks of the newspaper musical reporters.

In conclusion, may I add a possibly unwelcome protest, which is also a warning? I refer to the demand for cheaper orchestral records. Do we realise the value of a body of fine orchestral players under famous conductors? The position of men like Albert Coates, Beecham, Bruno Walther, and of orchestras like the Hallé and London Symphony, is among the celebrities. Look in the Victor catalogue and see where the famous orchestras and conductors in America are to be found—celebrity price! The engaging of an orchestra and a conductor of international standing is no cheap matter. The only way for cheaper orchestral records lies in cheaper style of performance or recording. We should surely prefer to pay 6s. 6d. for a high-class performance, finely recorded, than about 3s. 6d. for faulty playing and a little conductor with a little orchestra. Do we wish to lose the result of years of progress shown by our high standard of gramophone orchestral culture? On the other hand, I realise that there are works which do not need special renderings, and for this reason I welcome the cheaper priced, but nevertheless well-played and recorded, H.M.V. issues of the New Light Symphony Orchestra.

JOHN F. PORTE.

THE SECOND HALF-YEAR'S BAND RECORDS

By W. A. CHISLETT

THE inception of the new process of recording has added considerably to the difficulties of adequate reviewing, and a painstaking attempt to pick out to my own satisfaction definite advantages and disadvantages of the old and the new systems respectively has resulted in confusion worse confounded if anything. In spite of this state of hectic dizziness engendered by hearing again and again good and bad examples of each method, one or two concrete facts do emerge from the turmoil. The first impression on hearing a good example of the new process is that the result is much more like an actual band than anything that has ever been produced by a gramophone before, and if this hastily formed judgment is accepted at its face value and keenness of listening allowed to relax, it would be possible to live in this fool's paradise (for fool's paradise it is) for quite a long time. On the other hand, if the listener is curious enough to want to know why the result seems so much more realistic, and to find out takes the trouble to play the record again, disillusionment commences at once and grows rapidly. The reason for this appears to be that the new process conveys an excellent idea of the "broad" effect but fails in detail, or, in other words, the general effect of the ensemble is good but as the solo instruments play in turn the dreadful truth that most of these do not sound as much like the originals as they do in a record made by the old process is forcibly realised. The smooth silky tone of a clarinet in the hands of an expert gives place to the strident "squeaky" tone associated with some of the well-meaning but very trying amateur bands. Similarly the oboe sounds like a wheezy concertina and so on; but all this is not noticed at first in the glamour and excitement of so much noise and depth of tone. This depth and breadth of tone is largely accounted for by the fact that, whereas by the old process the effect obtained was so often that of one instrument to one part, now the fact that there are many instruments to some of the parts is no longer concealed. To coin a simile, "ribbons" of sound have taken the place of "threads"; but this, undoubted advantage though it be, is hardly sufficient compensation for the screechings, howlings, and falsifications of tone values which have accompanied it so far. To sum up, a distinct and large

advance has been made, but at present the results are promise rather than achievement. With the limited technical knowledge at my disposal I hesitate to suggest a possible factor in the solution of this complicated problem but the net result sounds to me so much like a band heard in a confined space and from too near a position that I am tempted to think that the placing of the recording apparatus further from the band would go some way towards correcting some of the shrillness, stridency, and falsification of tone. (I am informed that the apparatus actually used is so sensitive that it has to be "blanketed," and it would appear, therefore, that the removal of all or part of this deadening material would compensate for the added distance the sound would have to travel before being picked up and conveyed to the wax.)

Of the new recordings so far issued, *Martial Moments* (H.M.V., C.1217 and Col., 9065) and Moszkowski's *Spanish Dances* (H.M.V., B.2105) are the best. The former needs to be and is played with vigour and, as the brass section of the band is very prominent, the good points of the new process are accentuated and the bad ones not very conspicuous. Of the two versions I have a slight preference for that by the Grenadier Guards, but both are excellent. Much of the playing in the *Spanish Dances* is between mezzo-piano and mezzo-forte, and for this reason and the fact that the instrumentation is largely for the reed instruments probably the achievement of success was more difficult than in *Martial Moments* and is, therefore, more to be commended. *Vanity Fair Overture* (H.M.V., C.1219) can only be described as average as the vices and virtues are present in about equal proportions, while *First Heart Throbs* on the reverse, and *The Emerald Isle Selection* (H.M.V., C.1224) have more of the vices than the virtues. The latter is far inferior to the selection from this work played by the Life Guards Band and issued about a year ago. What can be said of the *Wembley Tattoo* records (H.M.V., C.1226-7)? The band and choir are splendid in places and the bagpipes are nothing short of marvellous. When played with a loud needle and heard from a distance the general effect is most realistic, but they are very difficult records to play satisfactorily in an ordinary house. A loud needle

nearly shatters the windows and makes some of the fife notes incredibly piercing, while with a soft or medium needle some of the realism is lost. It is, however, a record everyone should possess and is perhaps heard to the best advantage in a different room from the one in which it is played. Of the old process Columbia and H.M.V. records, by far the best is the *Suite* by William Byrd (H.M.V., C.1215). The more I play this the more I like it, and I have now almost convinced myself that it ought to have been written originally for a military band!

It can be predicted with confidence that we are going to have some good things from the Duophone Company. The suavity of tone of Lieut.-Colonel Mackenzie-Rogan's band is really beautiful, and the definition and balance achieved in the recording are good. As has been said before, the percussion department (especially the cymbals) has not been quite mastered yet, but this is a comparatively minor fault and one which will doubtless be cured soon. The *Ballet Music* from *Prince Igor* (A.1018) is even better than I thought at first, and *The Shoe* (A.1024) and the *Two Dances* by Herman Finck (B.5096) are equally good or even better.

The Life Guards Band have succumbed to a mild attack of operamania, and while all their records can be classed as good, the feeling that they are not really enjoying playing some of these selections cannot be dispelled. I prefer the *First Hungarian Rhapsody* of Liszt (Voc. K.05188) and the *Overture to Mirella* (X.966), the recording and playing of both of which are very bright and sparkling, to any of the operatic selections. This band has also made the best record I have heard yet of the famous *Colonel Bogey March* (K05201). As it is played at a speed of nearly 150 steps to the minute it would be very tiring to march to but this pace is admirable otherwise.

The Black Diamonds Band have produced a versatile collection of records, all of which are good. This band is on the light side and usually gives the impression that the tone is being deliberately suited to the recording room. As a consequence a really bad or a superlatively good record is rarely forthcoming, but the average is very high. The *Samson and Delilah* Selection (Zono. A.294) is rather below this average, but *All Scotch* (2665), *Songs of the North* (2654), and *Songs of Long ago* (2584) are distinctly good. These are all potpourris and the liberties taken with the tempi of the old Scottish songs in the first in order to give the correct rhythm for dancing are by no means as vandalistic as might be supposed. The other two are valuable as antidotes to the present day type of popular song.

The Welsh Guards Band has rather fallen from grace, with the result that the best recent Aco record is *Varsity* and *7th Regiment Marches* (G.15808) played by the U.S.A. 7th Regiment Band. Marches are also the pick of the Beltona issues, and of these

Handicap (836) is the best from every point of view. *Rainbow Division* on the reverse is quite good, and the pair make an admirable record for those to whom precision and rhythm appeal.

I am now being supplied regularly with the new issues of Actuelle records, and all I have received so far have been good. The more I hear the Garde Républicaine Band's playing of Luigini's *Egyptian Ballet Suite* (15207-8) the more I appreciate their beautiful delicacy. The only Imperial record I have received (1510) is very good as is the half record (5500) which apparently represents the military band output of the Parlophone Company during the last half year!

As the four versions of *Joan of Arc* were dealt with at length in the December number it is unnecessary to say more than that this music wears well. By the enterprise of the Aco and Beltona companies respectively we are now able to hear two famous Scottish Bands on the gramophone. Judging by the records (I have never heard either band in the flesh) I prefer the Clydebank Burgh Band to that of the Scottish C.W.S. The tone of both bands is big, but the definition and attack of the former is the cleaner of the two. Big-toned bands frequently drag a little and sound ponderous on the gramophone, and these two are not exceptions to this rule; and though the defect is not a great one in either case, a little more care expended in this direction would bear good fruit. *Tam 'o Shanter* (Beltona 6010) is a very fine record, as are *B.B. and C.F.* (Beltona 6007) and *Entry of the Gladiators* (Aco G.15724) marches. The remainder are good enough to make one want to hear a further batch of records by each band in which they should be able to make good use of the experience gained at their first visit to a recording room.

In making the final selections of the best records of the half-year they have been divided into three groups, and the verdicts are:—

New process Military Band: The *Wembley Tattoo* (H.M.V., C.1226-7) and *Martial Moments* (H.M.V., C.1217 or Col., 9065).

Old process Military Band: *Suite* by William Byrd (H.M.V., C.1215) and *Two Little Dances* (Finck) (Duophone B.5096).

Brass Band: *Joan of Arc* (Regal G8462-3) and *Tam 'o Shanter* (Beltona 6010).

Note.—Since the above was written a further new-process record by the Royal Air Force Band has been issued by The Gramophone Company. The titles are *Washington Grays March* and *Blaze Away March* (B2204) and it is a truly remarkable record. After careful listening I am quite sure that the number of instrumentalists is nearer 40 than the usual 25 or so.

W. A. C.

ARMCHAIR PHONATICS

X.—Designing and Making a Gramophone Horn

By P. WILSON

JUDGING from the number of enquiries I have received lately, there are quite a number of readers who desire to make a gramophone with a large external horn. Some practical hints on this subject were given by Mr. Balmain in the issue for December, 1923, and by "Isle of Streams" in the issue for October, 1925. Reference may also be made to a note (No. 318) by myself on page 100 and to a note (No. 285) by Mr. Balmain on page 152 of the current volume.

There are two fundamental properties of horns which should always be borne in mind. The first is that if two horns have the same size of open end but are of different lengths, the one with the greater length and smaller angle of taper will extract more energy from the sound-box than the other. There is, of course, a limit to the amount of energy that can be extracted from the sound-box without straining the diaphragm and the record groove, and for this reason, if for no other, there must be a limiting length of horn beyond which it is undesirable to go. The second property is that, *ceteris paribus*, the larger the open end of the horn the easier is the transference of the energy to the outer air. This is especially true as regards waves of low frequency—that is, the bass of the scale. These two properties can be demonstrated theoretically and they are amply borne out in current gramophone practice.

The main difficulty of horn design is to discover the most satisfactory curve. Theoretical principles are not sufficiently far advanced to give much assistance in this respect and the infinite number of possible variations makes experiment slow and uncertain. Recent practice, however, both in the gramophone and in the wireless world, seems to favour the curve known as the logarithmic or exponential curve. One of my friends who has made detailed measurements and calculations informs me that after due allowance has been made for the change of section from circular to rectangular, the horns of the new H.M.V. machines are based on the logarithmic curve. I do not propose to bewilder readers by describing what that curve is; I will rather give them simple rules by which they can draw the curve for themselves. First of all, I will give the rules for drawing the curve of a horn 4 feet long with an open end 2 feet across. Later on, I will show how the rules can be modified so as to apply to longer or shorter horns or to horns with a larger

or smaller open end. It should be understood that for this purpose it is assumed that the horn starts at the sound-box. So that either there is to be no tone-arm at all, as in the machine described in Mr. Balmain's article of December, 1923, or else the tone-arm will take the place of a corresponding length of the horn at the narrow end.

Along the centre of a sheet of paper about 54" long and 30" wide draw a line 48" long. From one end of this line space off successive distances 3" apart. At the points so obtained, distant 0", 3", 6", 9", etc. from the end, draw lines perpendicular to the centre line and on both sides of it. Along these perpendiculars measure the distances from the centre line, and on both sides of it, given in the following table:—

Distance from end	0"	3"	6"	9"	12"	15"	18"	21"	24"
Length of perp.	$\frac{1}{16}$ "	$\frac{3}{8}$ "	$\frac{1}{2}$ "	$\frac{3}{4}$ "	$\frac{1}{2}$ "	$\frac{1}{4}$ "	$1\frac{1}{8}$ "	$1\frac{1}{2}$ "	$1\frac{3}{4}$ "
Distance from end	27"	30"	33"	36"	39"	42"	45"	48"	
Length of perp.	$2\frac{3}{8}$ "	3"	$3\frac{1}{4}$ "	$4\frac{1}{4}$ "	6"	$7\frac{1}{2}$ "	$9\frac{1}{2}$ "	12"	

For clearness, it is perhaps necessary to explain that this table means that at the end of the central line the length of the perpendicular should be $\frac{1}{16}$ " on each side of the central line; at a distance of 3" the length should be $\frac{3}{8}$ " on each side; at a distance of 6" the length should be $\frac{1}{2}$ " on each side and so on. This process gives a series of points on each side of the central line. If smooth curves are now drawn, one on each side of the line, through those points, we get the plan of a horn four feet long, designed to a logarithmic curve, the diameter of the narrow end being $\frac{1}{8}$ " and the diameter of the open end being two feet.

It will be noticed that at the sound-box end the taper of the horn is very small indeed; in a length of 3" the diameter only increases by $\frac{3}{8}$ ". At the open end, however, the flare is very pronounced. The mathematically alert will also observe that the columns of the table given above can be divided into successive groups of three. The length of the perpendicular for the first column of each group is exactly double that for the first column of the preceding group. Similarly with regard to the middle and end columns of each group. This illustrates one of the properties of the logarithmic curve which probably has a good deal to do with its use in gramophone and wireless practice.

(To be continued.)

P. WILSON.

THE LIFEBELT

BY the time that these words appear in print we shall have an adequate supply of Lifebelts, complete with instructions for use and with an adaptor for H.M.V. or for Columbia machines, so that any reader who sends 5s. to the London Office and states the make of his gramophone will receive a Lifebelt by return of post. Those who have during the previous months been waiting impatiently have by this time been supplied.

There is now no doubt that every owner of a gramophone (except of the few makes which are unsuitable, such as Duophones, Cliftophones, and Edisons), would be wise to invest in a Lifebelt and to give it a good trial. Our correspondence, from which extracts were published last month—and a further instalment appears below—afford ample evidence that the Editor's and Mr. Wilson's experiments last summer with the device patented by the Rev. L. D. Griffith are fully confirmed.

The Lifebelt, to quote the first words of the leaflet sent out with every specimen, "has been designed for insertion between the tone-arm and sound-box of a gramophone so as to give the reproducing stylus a certain quality of flexibility. By this means the reproduction is made less shrill and more resonant without loss of brilliance and without detracting from the quality of notes in the upper part of the musical register. At the same time the wear on records is reduced to a minimum."

The following note has been written by Mr. Wilson to help those who find that the Lifebelt adds to the weight on the record:—

NOTE ON WEIGHT ADJUSTERS.

I have devised a counterbalance for use with a goose-neck tone-arm, which is both simple in construction and respectable in appearance. The parts required are: A "Meccano" perforated strip 7½ in. long (No. 1 b); a "wireless" screw terminal over 1½ in. long; a "wireless" earthing clip, with flanges drawn together by a screw-bolt, such as is used for earthing to a water-pipe; and a weight. The weight I made by filling a piece of brass tube 1 in. long and 1 in. internal diameter with lead, which I melted in an empty tobacco tin. Before the lead had solidified I inserted in it a smaller "wireless" terminal, leaving part of the screw projecting above the surface of the lead. The earthing clip A is fixed over the tone-arm, flanges downwards, just behind the T-piece where the goose-neck fits. It is insulated from the tone-arm by a rubber ring cut from a piece of tubing. The flanges are drawn together by two nuts on the large wireless terminal B, which projects towards the left at right angles to the tone-arm and below it. The

Meccano strip C is placed over the other end of the terminal and is prevented from slipping off by the milled nut D of the terminal loosely screwed. In this position it is parallel to the axis of the tone-arm and nearly 1 in. to the left of it. It is arranged so that its front part engages under the front part of the goose-neck at E. The weight F is attached, by means of the projecting screw terminal, to the

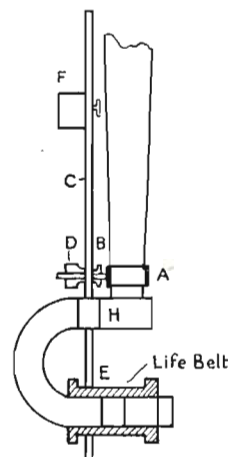


Fig. 1

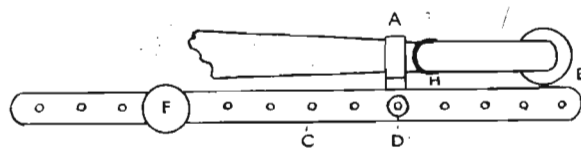


Fig. 2

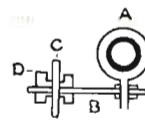


Fig. 3

rear part of the strip through any one of the holes. When the goose-neck is turned back on the tone-arm the strip engages with the back of the neck at H and so prevents the weight from dropping on the record. I put a rubber ring on the goose-neck at this place to avoid metallic contact and to ensure that the weight does not descend too far. Viewed from above the whole arrangement appears as in Figure 1. Figure 2 shows it as seen from the left. Figure 3 shows the earthing clip and terminal in fuller detail.

I find that the Lifebelt works best when the weight on the record is equal to the weight of the sound-box only; that is, when the weight adjuster exactly counter-balances the weight of the goose-

neck and Lifebelt. This position is easily found by adjusting the counter-weight so that the neck remains horizontal when the sound-box is not attached to it. I should like some reader to check this observation of mine. I am not very confident about it since the adjustment does not appear to be a critical one, so far as tone is concerned; a little difference either way does not seem to matter much. My conclusion is based rather on the fact that a fibre stands up better with that adjustment.

P. WILSON.

A SECOND SELECTION FROM LETTERS ABOUT THE LIFEBELT.

(12) [H.M.V. large table grand, fitted with Columbia No. 7.] I was too busy to fix the Lifebelt until yesterday evening, but a very brief trial told me that "it is the goods," as the Yankees say. I've heard the Vocalion records of the Dvorák *Nigger Quartet* by the Spencer Dyke for the first time—at any rate the slow movement. The scratch drowned the soft passages before, but now the 'cello "sings." I have made no adjustments, just simply fitted the "belt," checked the alignment and needle angle, and let it go at that; but I can foresee great things in the future. Another record which it improves *enormously* is that of the Bach *Double Concerto*, Kreisler and Zimbalist (H.M.V.); *without* the fitting there is *very little* string quartet about it, but *with* it you get it all.—REV. JOHN CONOLLY.

(13) [Columbia Grafonola No. 26A—fibres—room 12ft. by 14ft.—adjusted Lifebelt and added two narrow brass bands.] This certainly did make a decided improvement, bringing out the detail, drums, etc., much more clearly, and as a friend puts it, "filling the room with sound better."...The results are very decided to the man who listens for them, the drums in *A Roman Carnival* or *The Journey up the Rhine* for instance. The *fullness of tone* is to me the most important part of the result.—J. M. WHITEHEAD.

(14) I really must drop you a line to let you know how it has improved my Grafonola. I have tried all kinds of records and it certainly improves them all. There is no doubt about "hearing the bass" with the Lifebelt—anyhow this is so on my instrument. . . . In this climate I am afraid the rubber will soon perish, but I shall get another, as I cannot stop without having once sampled the improvement.—L. A. OZZARD, Malta.

(15) [Orchorsol.] I am astounded at the improvement, more particularly with regard to Vocalion, Parlophone, and Columbia records. There has been one failure only—the Victor *Unfinished Symphony*—but this seems to have been Lifebelted in the recording and it won't stand another dose of it. What I would like to know is, why are Parlophones and Vocalions improved in greater proportion than other makes? I had given up buying the former prior to using a Lifebelt, but now my old admiration for them has revived.—JOHN LE G. LACY.

(16) This, indeed, has given new life to my gramophone. I have heard instruments on my records which I could not hear without the Lifebelt. Perhaps the most startling result was from the only warped record which I have. There were no signs of any warp when playing it with the Lifebelt attached.—

(17) I have made a thorough test of the Lifebelt on my new Columbia Grafonola with the following results: *Tone*, much more resonant. *Definition* clearer. *Characteristic tone of instruments* more faithfully reproduced. The improvement is particularly noticeable in the strings, piano, and timpani. There is a very pleasing improvement in the *piano tone* in sonatas and accompaniments. The notes of the *lower register* more pronounced, with a consequent improvement in the balance of quartets played by the Lener combination. In the *vocal* records the improvement is most marked in the case of the baritone and bass solos, which are fuller. In all vocal records the words are much more distinct.

The foregoing improvements are not so marked on H.M.V. records as they are on Columbias and Vocalions. I may say that I always use fibre needles.

I discovered that in the case of very full records the Lifebelt was too long and prevented the needle from reaching the last few grooves. By shortening it to the extent of quarter of an inch the difficulty was overcome. With this reduced length the flexibility

is still sufficient to maintain the improvement in the tone, and, moreover, the track alignment is about as correct as it could be.—D. W. EVANS.

(18) I beg to acknowledge receipt of Lifebelt, which I have submitted to all-round tests on my new Grafonola, with eminently satisfactory results. With Columbia No. 7 sound-box and needle tension attachment and Petmecky needles I find Parlophone records greatly improved, also old H.M.V. records. Zonophones came out with greatest benefit, all shrillness being eliminated and vibrations absorbed, which was also the case with Regals. Bass and baritone songs are greatly mellowed on Zonophones, and Parlophone orchestral records gave decidedly better tone. . . . The Lifebelt is a very welcome acquisition, I am delighted with it.—CHARLES W. SCULTHORPE.

(19) [Three Muses A, Astra sound-box, fibres, home-made Lifebelt.] Results were: (1) Considerable reduction of "scratch"—tending to convert it to a "grate". (2) Elucidation of the parts, both orchestral and chamber music. (3) Very great improvement of bass—harshening of the brass—bringing lower strings into prominence. I found that the type of records benefited were: (1) H.M.V. recordings, especially *Emperor Concerto*, *Enigma Variations*, and Tchaikovsky *Symphony in E minor*. (2) Older Columbias, e.g. Elgar's *Violin Concerto* and Mozart's *Quartet in E flat*, Op. 14 (L.S.Q.). New Columbias did not seem to be so responsive. Polydors seemed to me to respond least of all.

I must add that the best results were obtained with fibre needles cut very sharp and projecting 4mm. only from the stylus holder. I have tested the results on several of my friends, knowledgeable and otherwise, and all agree that there is immense improvement, both as to volume of sound and "niceness"—whatever that may be. One criticised the harshness of the brass, but I think his ear may have been spoiled by the over lusciousness of the "Astra" sound-box as used previously.—HILDRED ROBINSON.

(20) Thanks for Lifebelt, from which I have got fine results, but only after much experiment. My instrument is a Columbia Grafonola 20A, but the earlier type which has much broader tone-arm base than later models. (This proved very handy.) The Lifebelt as first fixed, proved useless, so I set about a close study of your points and Mr. Wilson's articles, and decided that looseness was the fault, and that the flexibility required is small so far as it affects the position of the box to the record. I took down the tone-arm and dismantled the parts. I then rebuilt it minus the spring that relieves weight, the pin that prevents all-round swing, and the spring-catch that holds the sound-box in the collar. I also left out one of the base screws and in this hole I erected a suspender with "Meccano." I then forced one end of the belt into the sound-box collar (difficult, but possible). I then cut four Meccano strips to lay from the collar to the end of belt, where a rubber—lemonade bottle—ring clasped them to the belt ring. A Meccano bolt in one hole of each and more rings enabled me to hitch them to the tone-arm, and to each other. I put in the box, canted as much as possible towards better alignment with needle—angle practically vertical. I then adjusted the suspender—or rather supporter, for it passes under tone-arm, enabling me to close the lid, and lo! all my records were new and better than new. The magic of the change is the "life" in the tone. Everything takes on its true character and expression. Nothing is lost, not even volume, and much is heard that was missing before. The way it analyses the orchestra is marvellous, and the pleasure of listening to these increased manifold. I use Petmecky needles once only, the steepness taking the point immediately.—W. CROPPER.

(21) Having bought a Lifebelt four or five weeks ago and carried out tests with it on various records, I am forwarding a few observations I have made during my tests.

In order that you may compare my results with others using the same gramophone, I may say that the instrument I am using is a Columbia Grafonola No. 18B.

On the whole I am very satisfied with the Lifebelt as an improver of the gramophone and barring one or two exceptions all that is claimed for it, I have found to be true. The greatest advantage I have found is the correction of my track alignment from $13\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$ as it was at first, to about $2-3^{\circ}$, which besides reducing or rather sweetening the scratch and improving reproduction generally, has also, as one would expect, reduced the wear on records and prevented new records from breaking down after a few playings.

As regards the improvement in tone I find that this is carried out by the addition of the Lifebelt inasmuch that the reproduction is increased in volume and more depth is given to the instrument

in question. I find that several Columbia piano records which were originally of small volume have now considerably increased. The violin reproduction has been improved, I find, the most, in that the depth and general qualities of the instrument are better shown and a certain harshness which always accompanied violin records has been almost done away with.

Another type of record which has in my opinion benefited considerably from the Lifebelt, is the orchestral record. In these records the instruments are heard much more distinctly from one another than originally and whereas drums appeared as just a dull noise they are now brought out with clearness, as if one was listening in a concert hall.—E. WALKER.

(22) I have given the Lifebelt a month's trial, and am pleased to inform you that it is a sound—no pun—investment. My particular source of enjoyment is a No. 180 H.M.V. Mahogany Cabinet, No. 2 sound-box. I am not a tinkerer in any way, and use my gramophone solely for pleasure. Until the arrival of the New H.M.V. No. 4 I never regretted having stretched my purse to the limit of its capacity, and found that for me to go in for the No. 4 new machine of similar style to the one I have meant a sacrifice which, alas, I am unable to make. Hence your article, *re* the Lifebelt, was a straw at which I quickly clutched. Thank you for your introduction of this efficient addition. I gave it the first trial on a record which may appeal to very few real Gramophonists, viz., Savoy Band, H.M.V., *It ain't gonna rain no mo'*. But this particular record has the advantage of reproducing very good imitations of various types of bands, in rapid sequence, and in the "Boy Scout" section, drums are in prominence. These "drums" came out more like the real article than the instrument yields without the belt.

My next trials were on military bands, and incidentally, may I say, I find the new H.M.V. recordings, when played on *old* machines, are, I think, almost equal to the playing on the new No. 4, but the new No. 4 is certainly kinder to old recordings. I came to this conclusion after trying the H.M.V., Coldstream Guards, *Martial Moments*, new recording, and several Vocalion Life Guards. But in all the older recordings I found the Lifebelt distinctly improved the lower tones.

Next I ran over Peter Dawson's *Prologue* and here became a convert to orchestral records. The long introduction by the orchestra came out with a greater clarity and snap than I had hitherto heard, the singer's tone also was greatly improved.

I have never thought orchestral records approached so near actuality as do vocal records, consequently have not acquired a great stock. A friend the other day wanted to persuade me to look upon the gramophone as an instrument, just as one does say a pianoforte. Rightly or wrongly, to me this is of no use. What I want is, e.g., in vocal records, the singer in the room, etc., the nearer I get to actuality, the better it is for me. However, I have H.M.V. Queen's Hall Light Orchestra Ballet music from *Faust*, and with the aid of the belt, found that bell which in one part had always irritated me by its seemingly monotonous tinkle, really had a part, and, moreover, where hitherto I had suspected this bell "tinkling" on the first beat of the bar in a 3-4 movement, I found that in some bars it was struck on each of the three notes, and not the first only, thanks to the Lifebelt. I can really enjoy what had up to its receipt, been one of my supposed bad shots. I am now angling for more orchestral records, because I can now hear something approaching a real orchestra, and not merely a "gramophone" sound—if you will permit this base use of the word.

To sum up. I find on military band records, the lower notes, and cymbals, drums and similar instruments, come through particularly well, which is more than could be said before the Lifebelt was attached.

Orchestral records I now intend to collect. I think I need not say more.

Baritone and bass vocal records are more resonant.

Tenors—those that need it—lose some of their nasal "nippiness."

Sopranos. This is where I must admit the Lifebelt fails to effect any great improvement.

But in all cases I find the accompaniment is much better, pianoforte particularly so. All piano records are better.

It seems to me that some of my old, well-played records, which had developed a blast, were once more "hearable" by reason of the blast being diminished greatly. I don't know why this is so, and wonder if other "Belters" have noticed this?—GEO. DIMSDALE.



VAUGHAN WILLIAMS & SOMERVELL

By JOHN C. W. CHAPMAN

RALPH VAUGHAN WILLIAMS was born at Down Ampney, near Cirencester, in 1872. He was educated at Charterhouse and Trinity College, Cambridge, receiving the degrees of Mus.Bac. in 1894, B.A. in 1895, Mus.Doc. in 1901, and D.Mus. (Honoris causa) Oxford in 1919.

He studied at the Royal College of Music under Parry, Parratt, Stanford, Sharpe, and Moore; and later was a pupil of Max Bruch at Berlin and of Ravel in Paris. On his return to England he became organist at South Lambeth Church from 1896 to 1899. He is Professor of Composition at the Royal College of Music.

His compositions reveal the influences of folk-song and old English music, while the impulse of Ravel is often apparent. His setting of Walt Whitman's *Toward the Unknown Region*, performed at the 1907 Leeds Festival, placed him in the foreground of British composers. He has arranged Purcell's songs and *Fifteen Songs of the Eastern Counties*, as well as many folk-songs and carols. He has written two

sets of *Songs of Travel* to Stevenson's text; while his suite, *On Wenlock Edge*, from Housman's *Shropshire Lad*, is probably the finest example of his music on records.

His opera, *Hugh the Drover*, produced in 1924, is well represented, and an incomplete version of his *London Symphony* is also obtainable. But what ranks as his greatest work—the *Pastoral Symphony*—has yet to be done.

Dr. Vaughan Williams' recorded works are as follows:—

Opera, *Hugh the Drover*. H.M.V., D.922-26. See page 168 of catalogue and Mr. W. H. Oldaker's article on page 180 of THE GRAMOPHONE for September, 1925.

Suite, *On Wenlock Edge*, from Housman's *Shropshire Lad*. By the late Gervase Elwes, accompanied by the London String Quartet (Columbia 7363,4, 5). One of the finest sets of records Columbia has issued. Perfect on New Process.

STEVENSON'S "SONGS OF TRAVEL."

The Roadside Fire (Stevenson). By the late Gervase Elwes (Columbia 7365, obverse of No. 6 of *On Wenlock Edge*; also on L. 1074). By Horace Stevens (Vocalion X.9693). By Harold Williams (Columbia 3232). By Peter Dawson (H.M.V., B.1375). By Stewart Gardner (Aco. G.15401). By Stuart Robertson (Duophone B.5086). The Elwes rendering is a classic; next to it I rank the Stevens version; all the others, including the creditable Aco, are good.

Bright is the Ring of Words. By Peter Dawson (H.M.V., B.1355). A superb record.

The Vagabond. By Peter Dawson (H.M.V., B.1698). By Horace Stevens (Vocalion X.9693). Both records are first-rate. I prefer the Stevens version, but ultimate selection must be determined by choice of *The Roadside Fire* (q.v.) if duplication is to be avoided.

MISCELLANEOUS SONGS.

Linden Lea. By John Coates (Vocalion B.3118). By Watcyn Watcyns (Vocalion X.9391). By George Baker (H.M.V., B.1734). By John Thorne (Aco. G.15503). By Edgar Coyle (Columbia 3211). Respective degrees of merit indicated by order of placing. Either Vocalion should satisfy the most exacting.

Silent Noon. By Peter Dawson (H.M.V., B.1355). By Glanville Davies (Columbia 3682). Peter Dawson, as usual, is first-rate. The Columbia is pleasing, but second-rate.

BAND MUSIC.

Sea Songs—Quick March. By Band of 1st Life Guards (Vocalion X.9450). Bright and breezy.

Folk-Song Suite for Military Band. By Band of 1st Life Guards (Vocalion K.05086). By Band of Royal Air Force (H.M.V., B.1945). I prefer the excellent and famous Vocalion.

ORCHESTRAL MUSIC.

A London Symphony (two movements only). By Sir Dan Godfrey and the London Symphony Orchestra (Columbia L.1507, 8). See article by Mr. Percy Scholes in THE GRAMOPHONE of November, 1924.

The Wasps Overture. By the Composer himself, conducting the Aeolian Orchestra (Vocalion A.0249). I strongly recommend this excellent disc, which reaches a high standard of recording.

Old King Cole, Ballet Suite. By the composer himself, conducting the Aeolian Orchestra (Vocalion A.0247-48). See Vocalion December bulletin for short synopsis and THE GRAMOPHONE, pages 338 and 349. I greatly like these two fine discs which are technically excellent.

ARRANGEMENTS.

The Winter is Gone, and *Bushes and Briers*. By the De Reszke Singers (H.M.V., E.376). *Springtime*

of the Year and *The Turtle Dove* (H.M.V., E.315), *Wassail Song* (H.M.V., E.308), *A Farmer's Son* (H.M.V., E.405), all by the English Singers. *For all the Saints*. By the Cathedral Octet (Columbia 3659). *Loch Lomond*. By the Glasgow Orpheus Choir (Aco. G.15364 and Beltona 246). The four H.M.V.'s are a good investment; the others are of doubtful value.

ARTHUR SOMERVELL, B.A., Mus. Doc. (Cantab.), 1903, was born in 1863 at Windermere, and was educated at Uppingham and King's College, Cambridge.

He studied composition under Sir Charles Stanford and at the High School for Music, Berlin, in 1883-85, and under Sir Hubert Parry at the Royal College of Music in 1885-87. He became a Professor of the R.C.M. in 1894; and conducted his own works at Birmingham and Leeds festivals in 1895-97 and also at the 1907 Leeds festival.

He was appointed Inspector of Music to the Board of Education and Scottish Educational Department in 1901, becoming Principal Inspector of Music to the Board of Education in 1920. He is one of the most successful of English song writers, *The Shepherd's Cradle Song* being his most popular composition.

Dr. Somervell's recorded music is comprised in this meagre list:—

Gentle Maiden, by Frank Mullings (Columbia 2695). Pleasant on new process.

Shepherd's Cradle Song. By Edgar Coyle (Columbia 598). By Paula St. Clair (Vocalion X.9581). By Violet Elliott (Zonophone A.62). It would be difficult to better Miss St. Clair's beautiful recording.

Song Cycle on Tennyson's "Maud," O that 'twere possible, O let the solid ground, Go not, happy day, and A voice by the Cedar Tree. By Horace Stevens (Vocalion K.05186). Those who fall under the fascination of this disc will cherish it—as I do. See N. P.'s review, page 195 (September) and the Editor's opinion, page 208 (October).

Arrangement.—Jenny's Mantle (old Welsh air from *Songs of the Four Nations*). By Frank Titterton (Vocalion X.9595).

Let us hope that the great recording companies will soon do greater justice to the works of these two distinguished British composers. For instance, Vocalion might persuade Miss Jelly d'Aranyi to record the new *Concerto Academico*, which she played for the first time at Aeolian Hall on November 6th last. The National Gramophonic Society will probably issue the *Phantasy Quintet* in the near future.

My thanks are due to the Vocalion Gramophone Company, Ltd., for their helpful courtesy.

J. C. W. CHAPMAN.

CREDE EXPERTO

A Current Survey of Gramophone Progress

By OUR EXPERT COMMITTEE

VI.—“SWINGERS.”

THE Christmas season has prevented us from devoting as much time as usual to our tests. Moreover, we have been engaged in devising important experiments. The first of these will deal with the shapes and sizes of gramophone horns, and a special form of Balmain machine has been constructed for our work. We hope in this way to be able to study the effect of the size and curve of the horn without having to consider at the same time the effects of the material and the bends. These latter points will remain for further research.

We take the opportunity afforded by this interlude to make some remarks on the subject of “swingers,” since record manufacturers seem to have paid little attention of late to this most important question. We have found the worst offenders among Polydor and Parlophone records, but Vocalions, Columbias and H.M.V.’s are by no means above criticism.

The groove of a record is in the form of a spiral whose centre, or “pole,” should coincide with the centre of the spindle hole. In that case, the record rotates about the pole with constant angular speed, and the sound-box and tone-arm travel uniformly inwards towards the spindle. If the pole of the spiral does not coincide with the centre of the spindle, the sound-box and tone-arm swing inwards and outwards during each revolution of the turntable, and the record is then termed a “swinger.” In practice “swinging” may arise from any one or more of the following causes :

- (i) the spindle hole may be bored out of centre ;
- (ii) the spindle hole may be too large ; or
- (iii) the spindle itself may be turned too small.

It should be observed in regard to (i) that in a double-sided record the spindle hole may be accurately centred for one side and eccentric for the other, and in regard to (iii) that “swinging” is possible even with a correctly made record (see Vol. II., pp. 205, 307).

In practice a “swinger” causes the pitch of every note to waver and flatten. The amplitude of the note also suffers with the result which the Editor once described as a “hideous flattening tremolo.” This is particularly noticeable at the inside of a record where a sensitive ear can detect the wobble due to an eccentricity of less than 1/100th inch. When the record contains a long, sustained note of high pitch a much higher degree of accuracy is required. On Galli-Curci’s *Ah, fors’ è lui* the high note lasts for 17 seconds, and there an accuracy of

1/1000th inch or less is desirable. We wonder how many records have been condemned as badly performed or recorded when the real fault has been either in centring or in placing the record on the turntable ?

We cannot see any good technical reason why swingers should ever be issued. Modern machinery is capable of working to a much higher degree of accuracy than this problem requires. Yet there are records in which the eccentricity is more than 1/16th inch. We have seen it stated that the principal difficulty is the tendency of the pressing machinery to get out of adjustment after a little use, and we can quite believe that from a commercial point of view the problem is not easy. Nevertheless, we are convinced that it is capable of solution and that in the long run it would pay every company to go to the extra trouble and expense which is required. In an article published in THE GRAMOPHONE for October, 1923, it was stated that the Gramophone Co. can bore the spindle hole to within 1/10,000th inch. We wish they would do it—and do it every time.

Unfortunately, there are many desirable records, every copy of which seems to be a swinger, and no doubt every reader has some records which he would like to correct. For a thorough treatment of the subject we must refer readers to the articles by Mr. Woodhouse and Mr. Little in the issues for January and March, 1924. Temporary relief may be obtained by watching the swing of the sound-box and pressing the record up to the spindle at the point where the outward swing is greatest. The pressure can be given by the thumb-nail to the edge of the record in the direction of the line passing through the needle and the spindle. A mark can then be made on the label to show in future which part should be pressed up against the spindle. If the spindle is too thin every record may be an acting swinger and the remedies mentioned on p. 307, Vol. II., may be adopted.

Possibly the simplest solution of all our troubles would be for the manufacturers, *in the process of recording*, to cut a circular groove in the record, concentric with the spiral and of a standard radius. It would then be a comparatively easy matter to devise an instrument which would fit closely on the spindle and would have three or more points to fit in the standard circle so as to ensure accurate centring. In that case the spindle hole could be made larger than the spindle, and specially delicate adjustment in pressing would not be necessary.

LIST of RECORDED MUSIC of RICHARD STRAUSS

(Continued from p. 183.)

To the previous list the following addenda are necessary. They are gleaned from various sources, but special thanks are due to H. E. Adshead for his translation of a note on the songs from Dr. Max Burckhardt's "Führer durch die Konzertmusik" (Globus Verlag, Berlin), and to Theodore Purdy, Patrick Guimaraens, Terence White, and H. F. V. Little for valuable help. Besides the McCormack and Megane records mentioned below, new Strauss records issued since September are *Till Eulenspiegel* (Parlo E.10364, 10365) and *An Alpine Symphony* (Polydor 69803-7, five records).

ARIADNE AUF NAXOS.

Allegretto aus Overture: Ariette der Sängerin.—German H.M.V. 65977. Andrejerva von Skilondz.
Frauentanz (Najorde-Dryade-Echo).—German H.M.V. 65977. Andrejerva von Skilondz, M. Arndt-Ober, and B. Engel.
Zerbinetta's Air.—German H.M.V. 65978. Andrejewska von Skilondz.
Ein Schönes war and Den Namen nicht.—German H.M.V. 13996. E van Endert.
Es gibt ein Reich and In den schönen Feierkleidern.—German H.M.V. 15880. E. van Endert. Polydor 62374. Lily Hafgren-Dunkela.
Es giebt ein Reich.—Polydor 72976. Frida Leider.

ELECTRA.

Four H.M.V. S.S. records now withdrawn. Perceval Allen and Frederic Austen.

INTERMEZZO.

Skat-Szene, I., II., III., Teil.—Polydor 66126, 66127. Scheidl, Schützendorf, Fleischer, Henke, and Helgers.
Schlussduett, I., II., III., Teil (II. Akt).—Polydor 66127, 66128. Grete Merrem-Nikisch, and Theodor Scheidl.

DER ROSENKAVALIER.

Di rigori armato (Italienische arie).—German H.M.V. 20036. Karl Jörn. Vox 3060. Karl Pusch.
Nein, nein, ich trink kein Wein.—German H.M.V. 20036. Paul Knüpfer and E. van Endert.
Herr Kavalier (Walzer).—German H.M.V. 65254. Paul Knüpfer and Therese Rothauser.
Die schöne Musi.—German H.M.V. 65254. Paul Knüpfer and E. van Endert.
Quinquin er soll jetzt gehen.—Parlophone E10341. Heckmann-Bettendorf.

SALOME.

Dance of the Seven Veils.—Polydor 66065. Conducted by Dirk Fock.

SONGS.

Allerseelen.—Vox 2175. Rosette Anday. Odeon 575457. Tierner.
Cécilie and Eimerlei. Polydor 62525. Marcella Roeseler.
Freundliche Vision.—German Parlo. P.1529. Franz Steiner. Odeon 76229. Elisabeth Rethberg.
Heimliche Aufforderung. German H.M.V. 20039. Karl Jörn. German H.M.V. 13218. Franz Steiner. Vox. 2175. Rosette Anday. Odeon 79180. Carl Günther. Polydor 20212. Josef Burgwinkel. Polydor 62497. Fritz Windgassen.
Ich trage meine Minne.—Vox 2180. Helene Jung. German Parlophone P.1349. Franz Steiner. Odeon 79180. Carl Günther. Odeon 57545. Tierner. Polydor 62514. Otto Wolf.
Mit deinen blauen Augen. Polydor 62524. Marcella Roeseler.
Pilger's Morgenlied. Polydor 66005. H. Rehkemper.
Ruhe, meine Seele.—Polydor 20211. Josef Burgwinkel. Odeon 57547. A. Kipnis.
Seitdem dein Aug' in meines Schaute. German Parlophone P.1529. Franz Steiner.
Schlechtes Wetter. Polydor 62524. Marcella Roeseler.
Ständchen.—Edison 82269. Frieda Hempel. Polydor 19110. van Endert. Col. 74029. Nordica. Odeon 79229. R. Burg.
Traum durch die Dämmerung. Vox 2180. Helene Jung. German H.M.V. 13217. Franz Steiner. H.M.V., E.396. Leila Megane. Odeon 80122. Hans Duhan. Polydor 62497. Fritz Windgassen. Polydor 20133. Elisabeth Matthei.
Wiegenlied.—Polydor 66151. Gertrude Foerstel.
Zueignung. Vox 3079. Hermann Weil. Vox 2119. Mary Grasenich. German H.M.V. 14671. Kothé. Vox 3412. Björn Talen. Polydor 62515. Otto Wolf. Polydor 20211. Josef Burgwinkel.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—There are listed below several additions to the list of Strauss compositions published in your September number (p. 183):—

Rosenkavalier-Monolog. Hempel. H.M.V., D.B.373.

Der Einsame. Allin. Columbia L.1568.

Serenade. Nordica. Columbia 74029.

**Serenade.* Sembrich. Victor 81048.

Morgen. Dux. Brunswick 15027. McCormack. H.M.V., D.A.644.

**Mit deinen blauen Augen.* Ober. Victor 64447.

The two numbers marked with an asterisk are no longer issued by the Victor Talking Machine Company, but can be ordered specially at the current catalogue price. . . .

Below is a further list which I find in a German Odeon catalogue, but whether or not they can be obtained I do not know:—

ARIADNE AUF NAXOS.

Es Gibt ein Reich. 76385.

In den schönen Feierkleidern. 76386. Hedy Iracema-Brugelmann. (Orchestra acc.)

ROSENKAVALIER.

Arie des Tenor. 41632. Odeon Orchestra.

Frühstücks-Szene Arie. 41633. Odeon Orchestra.

Zueignung. 50680. Franz Naval, Tenor. (Piano acc.)

Cécilie. 51084. Michael Nast, Tenor. (Piano acc.)

Sincerely yours,

Washington.

THEODORE F. GANNON.

THE SONGS.

I come to Strauss as a song-writer, and I say at the outset that I quite dissent from the opinion of Bischoff, that Strauss has completed and crowned the new song-style commenced by Wagner and Liszt. Certainly he has written many pretty and sensitive songs; but with these are many trivial catchy ones, and many really hateful and ugly ones. That such excursions (Sprunghaftigkeit) can be a "style" is out of the question, nor is it a completion of a song-style. Further, that which has often brought him highest praise, that he is the first to set modern poets, is not the case. Already before him composers (like the recent Nodnagel, of Königsberg) have used the poems of Makay, Dehmel, Liliencron, etc. Strauss' choice, however, falls more readily on verse which is erotic or musically sensuous (Geisteleien) that is, capable of inducing emotional states or socially inspired. (These sentences are difficult.) Of such psychic verse (Stimmungsgliedern) is the well-known *Traum durch die Dämmerung*, in which Strauss with a suitable accompaniment phrase and harmony, excellently pictures the soft twilight influence, and by this means also hides the not particularly attractive melody. Interesting is Strauss' ability to arouse in the listener a sense of particular colour. In this connection the line at the end "in ein mildes blaues Licht" has a harmony which actually sounds "blue."

One of the most attractive is *Ständchen* from Op. 17. Here also a melody is written with exceptionally heavy piano accompaniment, which strangely resembles the song of the Rhine daughters in the first scene of Wagner's *Rheingold*. Op. 21, *Schlichte Weisen* (simple tunes) comprises very pretty songs. Here Strauss shows himself master of the small song form. These melodies are at any rate "simpler" than in those of Max Reger's work of the same title. The best is certainly the simple *All meine Gedanken* and the dainty *Du meines Herzens Krönelein*. In Op. 22, *Mädchenblumen* appear (fällt auf) many admirable characterisations. A peculiarity is observed in Op. 19, 2 *Breit' über mein Haupt* and in Op. 27, 1 *Ruhe meine Seele*, the mood (Stimmung) is represented by juxtaposed heavy-lying chords, it is, so to speak, one splash of colour after another, that is, musical impressionism. The melody (melodik) of Op. 19, 2 is a rare mixture of banality and depth. A likewise simple, very expressive song is *Ich trage meine Minne ver Wonne stumm*. In Op. 31, 3 *Weisser Jasmin*, the restlessness of the modulation appears unattractively striking; bar by bar is pictured in a different key (Tonarten). Grandly constructed are *Heimliche Aufforderung* and *Cécilie*. From Op. 56 can be selected *Gefunden*, which is simple and interestingly formed, though not of equal rank with Goethe's poem. The construction of *Mit deinen blauen Augen*, which starts flowingly and melodiously is ruined by the shower of dissonances in the concluding lines.—Dr. Max Burckhardt, translated by H. E. Adshead.

THE FORUM

The following articles are unsolicited contributions from readers, dealing with this or that aspect of the gramophone to which each has given thought. A selection from the MSS. received is published every month, and prizes are offered every quarter. Articles should not exceed 1,500 words, and should be typewritten or written very legibly on one side only of the paper. They should be sent to THE GRAMOPHONE, 58, Frith Street, London, W.1., marked "The Forum": and a stamped and addressed envelope should be enclosed.



MARCEL JOURNET

By A. M. GORDON-BROWN.

MARCEL JOURNET is one of the greatest operatic basses in the world, and in my own opinion is equalled by none; I even commit the sacrilege of preferring him to the Great God Chaliapine! But the quality of Journet's voice is quite different from that of Chaliapine's; Chaliapine is not a basso profundo; moreover, the French and Russian schools of singing are totally different. It is a curious fact that so many of the greatest basses the world has known were French trained—Lablache, Edouard de Reszke, Plançon, and Journet are fine examples. But to return to the subject of Journet and Chaliapine, there is really very little ground for comparison between them; they have both reached the top of their own particular tree—which is the highest tree I am not in a position to say, but I prefer the foliage of Journet's, and its colour blends better with others; what would Chaliapine sound like as the bass in the *Lucia* sextette? Chaliapine must dominate, and basses are seldom meant to dominate in operatic ensembles.

Journet was born at Nice in 1869 and was trained by Saghetini. He made his début in Belgium, but did not begin his long Covent Garden career till six years later than this. After a long period of European triumphs, he migrated (like nearly all really great singers) to America. He returned, however, in 1908 and became a pillar of the Paris Opéra. He created the rôle of Simon the Magician at the world premier of Boito's *Nerone* at La Scala, Milan, in 1924, and is singing at that theatre again this year at the age of 67.

There is a large number of Journet's early records in the Victor catalogue of obsolete records which will be re-pressed (single-sided) on special request. Among these are the three arias from *La Damnation de Faust* (and there is a fourth in the French H.M.V. catalogue), two from *Philemon and Baucis*, *Suoni la Tromba* from *Puritani*, sung with Ancona (what artists!), two duets with Clement from *Robert le Diable*, a *Carmen* duet with Dalmores, one or two Wagnerian solos, and the *Meistersinger* quintette, sung with Gadski, Van Hoose, Mattfield, and Reiss.

In the Italian H.M.V. catalogue there is a *Nerone* record which is not in our English list, *Tu qui? Gloria al tuo Dio*, with which is coupled *Queste ad'un lido fatal*, sung by Franco Lo Giudice (tenor). It is 12in. Red Label and costs 55 lire.

In the French catalogue there are four records not known in England: *Esprits des flammes* from *La Damnation de Faust* is excellent, and Black Label (10in., 4s.), and has got a trio from the same opera (in which Journet does not figure) on the reverse. Then there is the *King's Prayer* from *Lohengrin*, coupled with a *Hamlet* aria sung by Renaud (Black, 12in., 6s. 6d.). The Journet excerpt must be very old, and the recording is bad, but the voice is powerful and ringing, especially in the low notes. Next there is the *Ana-*

thème de Balthazar from *La Favorita*, sung in French with a tenor, Dupoy, coupled with a trio from *Romeo and Juliet* sung with Bakkers and Rocca (Black, 12in., 6s. 6d.). Lastly, there is a much cut, but magnificently sung, version of *Wotan's Farewell* (*Walküre*) on two sides of a 10in. record (Red Label, 6s.). This is sung in French with any amount of power and godlike majesty, but the cuts and the over-hurrying of the orchestral passages are rather disastrous.

Of the records in the current English catalogue, my favourite is *Ella giammai m'amo* from *Don Carlos*, which is sung in Italian (not in French as it says on the label). It is coupled with a duet from the same opera by Martinelli and De Luca (D.K.127). I think this is a late recording, and his voice is more soft and mellow than I have ever known it; his phrasing is delightful, and his tone on the closed high notes could hardly be bettered. Perhaps the next best record is *Qual volontà trascorere* from *I Lombardi* (D.M.126), sung with Alda and Caruso, and the *Samson and Dalila* trio with Homer and Caruso. The *Lombardi* trio could not be sung better, all artists are at the top of their form—and more there is no need to say. Of Journet's two *Sarastro* arias from the *Magic Flute* I prefer *Isis! c'est l'heure* (D.A.259), because, although both are quite first class, in *La haine et la colère* (D.B.613) Journet sings a little sharp in both his descents to the low E. Both arias are majestic and sombre—beautifully phrased.

All Journet's *Faust* records are excellent, and of these I prefer *Il était temps!*, but *Le veau d'or* on the reverse is, I think, the least good of them all—tone rather harsh and unsteady. I like his *Nella bionda* from *Don Giovanni* immensely (the first part, *Madamina*, is in the obsolete Victor catalogue), but I must here confess Chaliapine superior. He sings beautifully in the *Mignon* duet (D.O.101) with Farrar, and his duet with Martinelli (D.K.120) is good, but the part is pitched rather high for Journet, and I think it is transposed. I don't greatly care for either his *Suoni la tromba* with Amato (D.K.110) or his *Abietta zingarra* (*Trovatore*), where his tone is much harder than in any of his other records that I know; this is D.B.310.

It may be of interest to Pathé enthusiasts that Journet sings the part of Frère Laurent in the complete *Roméo et Juliette* in the French catalogue.

A 12-inch record of the famous *Wahn* monologue from *Meistersinger*, sung by Journet in Italian, has just appeared in the Italian H.M.V. catalogue. Interpretation and vocal colour are both excellent. In recent years Journet's voice has gone up considerably, and although he is losing his low notes his voice is still extremely powerful and fine.

A. M. GORDON-BROWN.

FEEDING MUSIC TO THE YOUNG COMPOSER

By ERNEST BROOKS

FROM the days of guilds and apprentices it has been common for the young to study the wisdom of the old in association with men in the field of kindred endeavour. The Industrial Revolution made changes in this social order. Home products were no longer able to compete with the magnitude of factory production. Children no longer followed the trades of their fathers necessarily, but launched out into strange fields of energy and association. Now, with magnified population, it is necessary to find these associations by proxy in a large number of cases. Men take advantage of books, moving pictures, radio, music reproducing instruments, and minor ways of satisfying their needs.

The embryo composer must take thought of the music of others in the development of his technic. He can not afford to be narcotized by narrowness. Breadth of mind should be his continually conscious aim. Of such stuff are the socially efficient made.

I am conscious of a developing musical originality in the United States, in which I am not alone. This originality was considerably induced by the so-called modernism. It awakened men from lethargic imitation to a new spirit of creation. Of course, the spirit spread by means of telepathic intelligence, as is evidenced by the coincidental inventions of the several pioneers in the art of modern times. The main bulk of propagation of the new idea depended on the publications and recordings of the few retaining the key to the new idea.

Public performance of the new music was slow to materialize, and after realization of this, few had the opportunity to hear it. Too many young spirits in the great middle portion of this country never had a chance to hear good modern orchestra music. This applied in some lesser degree to the concert performances. Who can expect to hear a performance of *Pelleas et Melisande* in this part of the country when it is seldom given even at the Metropolitan or in Chicago? I am yet trying to explain to myself how it happened that the Chicago Opera Company gave *Boris Godunov* with Chaliapin, in their tour in the south. But only the large towns heard this. How many latent creators were able to take advantage of these few and narrowly distributed productions? The symphony concerts are the same way. Too few towns hear them. And when the St. Louis Symphony comes through the main towns of a few surrounding states they play the stock repertoire of classic music, stuff which can be heard on the talking machine, played by any Umpty-Ump orchestra. They play a diminutive modicum of modern music in the home city, where the society élite are the sieves through which the music may sink into oblivion. It seems to me that people want to hear the efforts of the contemporary composers. Why should they wait until its composers are dead, discouraged, and less productive? If he were encouraged, how much more music could we expect from him? In listening to music of to-day, controversies arise in which the voice of the composer may be heard, if he has strong vocal organs, in an endeavour to give us an understanding of his work. If his music is not performed there is little opportunity or occasion for him to have anything to say, except as a music teacher.

How many people in a spirit of noble sacrifice would contribute, for example, to a memorial which could not be done in their lifetime? They would say that they are the ones to get the most out of it, so why not something that they could enjoy? Now, those who come after us can enjoy our music, but is there not something we get out of contemporary things which they miss? It is like a woman who buys her spring hat shortly after Christmas. Someone says: "Well, we can not play this modern music for the common people. They can not appreciate it." The trouble is they do not

appreciate it themselves. Furthermore, how on earth can people enjoy anything which is never presented to their sense? Beethoven's music was not spontaneously received. It had to be repeatedly performed until the audiences were cultivated to his spirit. And that in a country where people showed their love for music by going to hear it! Modern music is less complicated than its predecessor. The spirit of it can be absorbed spontaneously by the broad, unbiased mind.

The gramophone is the saviour of modern music. Now, one can afford to hear the music of his choice repeatedly. The boy in the middle of America can satisfy that longing to know about the music of which he has read and expects so much. He senses its kindred appeal to something in him which is urging for expression. Then he makes his first efforts at composition, which are imitative, because he is overwhelmed by some music of his acquaintance. I am making this analysis, not merely from psychological principles, but from experience. The school of his imitative efforts is of relatively long duration. As his mind develops along ever expanding lines, in hearing new music and new ideas, he is making himself original by developing the power to reason for himself. He can start with Debussy's second *Arabesque*, *Submerged Cathedral*, listen to Casella's *Puppazetti* on the reproducing piano, also the *Rhapsody in Blue*, both on piano and gramophone. As his apperception increases, *Don Juan*, *Ariane et Barbe-Bleue*, *L'après-midi d'un Faune*, *Firebird*, *Petrouchka*, *Verklärte Nacht*, and many others bring him into a state where he begins to know himself and his capacities and limitations. From that point of development he strikes out for himself.

Who can imagine the number of geniuses who have not been added to the known list, merely because they were isolated and had no chance to be stirred by the efforts of others? Debussy is the first to claim him. Stravinsky follows, then Schönberg, dependent on type of mind receiving the stimulus. Other claim him at intervals. De Falla fascinates him in *Fantasia Baetica*, Ravel in *Ondine* and *The Fountain*, Musorgski in songs and orchestra music, d'Indy in *Depart Matinal*, Lili Boulanger in *Nocturne* and *Cortège*, Delius in *Brigg Fair*, Gershwin's jazz, Palmgren in *La Mer*, Albéniz in *Malagueña*, Scriabin in *Pathetic Study*, records of music of the oriental countries, Scriabin's *Poeme de l'Extase*, all build strongly within him.

The gramophone can do the highest service of any to the young composer. There are no schools in the world which can as effectively develop the mind musically as the gramophone service. The gramophone offers an inducement to composers in another fashion entirely. It is evident that this type of reproducing instrument has its peculiar qualities of tone. Why should composers not write music with this thing in mind, that it should be gramophonic in character? We can see that eventually all music of account shall be recorded, so instrumental and arranged music must be of the highest order. Composers can study each other's methods and idioms more easily by having records of their music. Debussy's string quartet, in part, is a very good recording example. It sounds as though it was written for the gramophone's special tone qualities. More of this kind of music should be recorded. It is noticeable that modern music records better than the older, as a rule. That fact alone explains why records of modern music can be sold in abundance. Composers should be consulted about interpretations, though it is not necessary to abide by their own interpretation, as there have been known cases of improvement over the author's idea. It is good for the writer to hear his own works. He can not play them to himself and grasp the situation

"as she is." Constant repetition either tears down or builds the reputation of music. In recorded form good music will be necessary to stand the test. It is a good way to enjoy music in the comfortable privacy of home as opposed to "stiff-necking it" in the concert hall. Thus, people can hear the music to fit their moods. In concerts one has to make himself receptive to anything that is offered. Also he is more critical and his feelings are repressed.

Finally, I want to suggest a number of compositions which should certainly be recorded: Debussy's opera, the other

two *Nocturnes*, *Ibéria*, *La Mer*, more songs, sonatas, Ravel's *The Valse*, *Rhapsodie Espagnol*, the rest of *Gaspard de la Nuit* (I wish Mr. Hambourg would do it), Stravinsky's *Fireworks*, *La Rossignol*, Japanese songs for voice and orchestra, *Sacre du Printemps*, Schönberg's *Pierrot Lunaire*, de Falla's *Nights in the Garden of Spain*, more songs of Musorgski, Varèse's *Hyperprism* and *Intégrales*, Scriabin's *Prometheus*, Holbrooke's *Mask of the Red Death* and *Bells*, Dukas' *Le Peri*, Debussy's *Marche Ecossaise*, and Delius' *Paris* music. Much more could be added.

ERNEST BROOKS.



DE GROOT

By ARTHUR W. GAYTON.

FOR many years I regarded the gramophone, in common with the thumb-screw, the safety-razor, and the bagpipes, as an instrument of torture, incapable of awakening in the sensitive any but painful sensations. I had never listened to a good machine. I did not believe that there was one, and I always politely declined pressing invitations to make closer acquaintance of what, to my mind, represented nothing but [strange metallic discordance issuing from back street houses on Sunday evenings.

Yet to-day I am a gramophone enthusiast, duly acknowledging to the little portable many hours of pleasure, and, looking backward recently in an effort to discover the cause of my conversion, I came to the conclusion that he who must be indicted for my present susceptibility to the lure of the dealer's window is none other than our old and esteemed friend, Mr. De Groot.

It was some time during 1920 that I first heard one of the Piccadilly Orchestra's records, and I have not now forgotten the surprise it gave me, for all that it was well worn and played on a machine long past its prime, without those niceties of speed and discrimination in the matter of needles which, I have since discovered, distinguish your true "gramophile" from his soulless fellows. The tune itself was the merest nonsense, *If you could care*, a popular air from a revue of the period, but though I had heard it many times before, it had never sounded quite like this. I perceived here a musical quality which I had hitherto thought impossible in a gramophone record, a sweetness and delicacy and charm which were not to be gainsaid, and, after hearing two other records by the same orchestra, *Golden Butterfly* (H.M.V., B.1162) and *Kashmiri Song* and *Less than the dust* (C.410), I was sufficiently convinced of the musical possibilities of the gramophone to buy one—of a reliable make—myself.

Since then I have had many of De Groot's records, and he remains, for me, the unrivalled interpreter of popular light music. Every month, from some mysterious unfailing source, he snaps up for us a couple of unconsidered trifles, or, taking old ones, proceeds to consider them anew in his own graceful and inimitable manner.

Nihil tangit quod non ornat may be said to epitomise his art, which is essentially that of the virtuoso, the translation of the commonplace into the significant by sheer force of craftsmanship. Like Bernhardt redeeming the tawdry mechanisms of Sardou, or Brangwyn finding beauty in the lines of a riverside crane, so with De Groot the subject is nothing, the treatment all. He does not deal in the abstruse, which is only to be expected, since his workaday job is

merely to enhance the pleasures of gastronomy, and so you find that all his offerings are of the popular order, ranging from musical comedy selections and *Abide with me* to Grieg and Verdi. True most of it is hackneyed enough, but his touch revitalises it, and even the old familiar drawing-room ballad, yielding to this subtle alchemist, transcends memories of the throaty tenors and twittering sopranos of suburban nights; more than which can no man hope to achieve! (e.g., *Wait and I passed by your window*, B.1117). *The Clock is playing* (B.1336) illustrates admirably his capacity for etherealising and decorating a triviality, and is one of my favourites.

Being of that company to whom the "New-Poor" column of this journal is addressed, I have never attained to the delights of seeing and hearing Mr. De Groot amid the amenities of the Piccadilly, but I was fortunate enough to catch him in two appearances at the Victoria Palace last year, where, assisted by his pianist and 'cellist alone—a pity, this, for an opportunity of hearing the full orchestra would have been welcome—he discoursed most excellent music. Or perhaps I should rather say, discoursed very ordinary music most excellently, for on both occasions the programme contained nothing remarkable, yet these three—if I may be permitted to say so—prosaic and wholly unromantic-looking gentlemen held the "house" spellbound and silent.

They played us old stagers like the *Intermezzo* from *Cavalleria Rusticana*, the *Bach-Gounod Ave Maria*, and *Softly awakes my heart*. The only item unknown to me was one of those "Hungarian dance" sort of things with frequent changes of tempo, in which De Groot excels (*Dances Tziganes*, B.1721, is of this kind). But the maestro knows his business, and he brought to these old themes a finish and freshness of treatment which, in each instance, left the audience begging for more. The applause after every selection was tremendous and numerous encores had to be conceded. Once he responded with a fragment of *Pagliacci*, including *Vesti la giubba*, into which not even the great Enrico himself could have infused more fervour. This completely "brought down the house," so, coming in front of the curtain, De Groot regaled us with *All Alone*, throwing off that ubiquitous trifle with all the dignity of a Kreisler attacking a concerto.

It is a tribute to the excellence of the H.M.V. recording that some of the artist's *pianissimos*, which, in the Victoria Palace, a hall of quite moderate dimensions, were so fine as to be scarcely audible at the back of the "house," come through on the gramophone as well as they do. To capture and preserve, in lifeless vulcanite, the fairy-like qualities of De Groot's miniature art is a *tour de force* indeed.

TRADE WINDS AND IDLE ZEPHYRS

Luella Paikin

The activities of that admirable organisation, the International Celebrities Subscription concerts, are in full swing. No doubt they are well advertised locally; and no doubt everyone realises what a vast help to the enjoyment of gramophone records is a memory of having seen and heard the artist, even if only once in a crowded, overheated concert hall. But it may be worth while to state where some of these celebrities will be appearing during February. Luella Paikin, who has no need of the embraces of Madame Tetrassini to endear her to her audiences, will be touring with Sir Thomas Beecham and the London Symphony Orchestra: Leicester on the 3rd, Hanley on the 4th, Liverpool on the 5th, Dublin on the 6th, Belfast on the 8th, Edinburgh on the 9th, Dundee on the 10th, Glasgow on the 11th, Middlesbrough on the 12th, Blackburn on the 13th, Hull on the 15th, Sheffield on the 16th, Nottingham on the 17th, and Bristol on the 18th. They will need some Bristol cream by that time!

Meanwhile Miss Evelyn Scotney will be appearing with the wonderful Kedroff Quartet (Russian male voices) at Bradford on the 1st, Newcastle on the 3rd, Hull on the 4th, Middlesbrough on the 5th, Birmingham on the 8th, Halifax on the 11th, Leicester on the 17th, Liverpool on the 18th, Cardiff on the 20th, and will also end up at Bristol on March 1st.

Elena Gerhardt will give three concerts in London, at the Queen's Hall on the 2nd and 21st, and at the Albert Hall on the 14th. She will be at Cheltenham on the 4th, at Cambridge on the 8th, at Eastbourne on the 12th, at Oxford on the 17th, at Birmingham on the 22nd, at Liverpool on the 25th, and at Dublin on the 27th.

The Lener Quartet will play at the Queen's Hall on the 7th and will appear with Madame Gerhardt on the dates given above at the Albert Hall, Queen's Hall (21st), Birmingham, Liverpool, and Dublin.

Vocalion Catalogue, 1926

Some good honest work has been put into the preparation of the new Vocalion catalogue, which is as well printed as hitherto, but is now arranged so admirably that it is a real help to the user. The dance records have been relegated to a separate section at the end, and the rest of the records are now traceable in any of three sections, under alphabetical lists of titles, of performers, and of composers. This is exactly as it should be and a matter for grateful congratulation.

Polydor in English

Messrs. Alfred Imhof have sent us a copy of a booklet of "Classical and Modern Orchestral Music on records of the Deutsche Grammophon A-G" (which means Polydor) as sold at 110, New Oxford Street, W.C. 1. It is a booklet which should be in the hands of everyone of our readers, for it contains in a very clear form a list of all the orchestral records in that remarkable Polydor catalogue, and moreover it is written in English. May we hope that it will be followed by a catalogue of the operatic records also in English? This is a great desideratum. But why not also in good English? Why this farrago of Teutonisms? If none of the agents for Polydors in this country was willing to superintend the production of the catalogue we would gladly have suggested

someone competent to do it, and to provide the ha'porth of tar which was needed to make the booklet really ship-shape. Even the prices are still in German marks!

No. 21, Frith Street

The photograph of this house, on another page, shows that no one is likely to find Mozart's initials cut on the window-sill. The able author of "A Musical Pilgrimage in Vanishing London" wrote in *Musical Opinion*, October, 1925: "The next move [for Leopold Mozart and his two children] was to new lodgings, with

Mr. Williamson, of Thrift Street (now Frith Street), Soho... The house (rebuilt in 1858) has been identified by the late F. G. Edwards as No. 21 on the east side of the street. Mr. Thomas Williamson was a 'wax and sperma cœti chandler,' likewise a churchwarden at St. Anne's. His next door neighbour but one (on the north) was Romilly, the jeweller, father of Sir Samuel Romilly, born there in 1757."

The house next door (with the balcony) must have been standing in those days.

The other photograph of "Mozart as a boy" hardly shows the statue off to advantage (it appears to be in rather disconcerting company in the Luxembourg!) but was kindly sent by a reader, Miss Eddowes, of Lincoln.



LUELLA PAIKIN.

A Note to the Trade

It is good to hear one's shy convictions confirmed from an outside source, and the following letter from a gramophone dealer, Mr. Albert White, of Hambleden, Henley-on-Thames, expresses something which we should much like to see engraved on the heart of every dealer in the country. "May I have the pleasure," he asks, "of testifying to, and of thanking you and your staff and your contributors for, the unique assistance I derive from the wholly

admirable technical articles, reviews, critiques, and comparisons published month by month in your entertaining magazine? Used intelligently, slavishness avoided, they should be of inestimable value to every gramophone trader. Scorn and superciliousness do not pay. THE GRAMOPHONE saves me personally much time, money, and trouble. I look upon my subscription as a most profitable investment, and I should miss the ordinary trade periodicals much less than I should miss THE GRAMOPHONE."

If every reader would show this quotation to a local dealer who does not yet keep a pile of GRAMOPHONES on his counter, the reverberations of his friendly action would eventually reach the London office.

Waterloo for Fibres

The staunch fibreur seldom admits defeat. Why should he confess that he cannot get through any particular record without breaking the point of a fibre needle, while his steelite rival never has the decency to announce that he has ruined a record on the first playing with a steel needle? But there is a type of unpatriotic (or is it unprejudiced?) fibreur who has no shame. Has the fibre met its Waterloo? he asks, and gives his instance. The loyalists rush forward: a sticky motor, a heavy sound-box, an unsharpened point, they yell. "We never have the slightest difficulty, etc."

We give them another red rag. A correspondent writes: "I find that with an ordinary fibre I cannot play the last side of the Tchaikovsky *Fourth* right through... I mean the ordinary

fibre, undoped. I have tried levelling the machine and all lengths of needle, but this side, and other three of my records, break with monotonous regularity."

To the jousts, gentlemen.

Hard of Hearing

There's a queer paragraph in Captain H. T. Barnett's "Gramophone Tips" about the deaf. "I once had a stone-deaf acquaintance who could not hear my gramophone when sitting close to it, but if he put his hands on the horn he could sense the music so perfectly as to be able to tell a sweet-toned record from an ordinary one, and he much preferred records having sweet tone." Has this been tested by other people? At any rate, the partially deaf, who cannot enjoy a concert unless they sit in the front row, have found great solace in the gramophone; and the famous picture of Mr. Edison listening to one of his own machines is a reminder that deafness is not a bar to enjoyment. Perhaps Beethoven might have heard his own works on gramophone records.

An interesting syllabus of a scheme of work for the Hard of Hearing by means of the gramophone, wireless, player-piano, &c., has been sent to us by Mr. Selwyn Oxley, the Hon. Organising Secretary of the Guild of St. John of Beverley, whose London office is at 75, Victoria Road, Kensington, W. 8; the scheme being (a) to give spiritual instruction; (b) to teach; and (c) to amuse. In reference to the first object, the recent progress in choral records with a real grand organ leads to the hope that some of the great oratorios will soon be available on records—Mr. Herman Klein's article on *Messiah* and *Elijah* in February, 1925, will be remembered—and that if the demand is unmistakable the present supply of records suitable for religious purposes will be largely increased. Wireless has elicited but not satisfied the demand.

Misprints

Among the more outrageous misprints in the last number were: (1) 3s. instead of 2s. 6d. as the price of 10in. Parlophone records on page 353; (2) 25s. instead of 19s. 6d. as the price of the Mozart sonata (Catterall) and of the *Casse-Noisette Suite* (H.M.V.) in the list of Popular Records on page 378; and (3) *Misette* instead of *Mah Jongg* as the title of one of the Strumillo dances which we have published through Messrs. Goodwin and Tabb, the fact being that *Mah Jongg* and *La Sirène* have been published and *Misette* will follow in due course.

Repairs

People are beginning to realise that expert overhaul of gramophones is periodically necessary, as much a matter of normal prudence as the quarterly contract with a piano-tuner. But it is not so easy to arrange, and the habit at present is to wait till a gramophone is badly out of order before taking it to the local dealer for repairs. We are generally unable to advise enquirers on this subject, but here, on the same day, comes information about two "specialists" who are ready to give all the advice and help about individual machines that the individual owner desires. One is Mr. K. G. Clark (the inventor of the "K.G.C." gramophone), of 100, Queen's Road, Buckhurst Hill, Essex; the other Mr. W. R. Collier, who helped us with the office gramophones when he was in the employ of the Gramophone Exchange, and who has now

set up for himself at 15, Little St. Andrew Street, St. Martin's Lane, London, W.C. 2. We shall be glad to receive and to hand on any information about local dealers in the provinces who make arrangements to overhaul their clients' gramophones periodically.

A New Cover

"A gramophile who has derived much pleasure and instruction from THE GRAMOPHONE, and who desires to remain anonymous, has only one objection to the publication—its cover. The enclosed may be acceptable as a substitute. If so, pray use it; if not, scrap it."

It seems a pity to scrap the enclosed design, which is very ingenious, with a straw-plaiting effect. But it would be a greater pity to change covers in mid-stream; and whether from familiarity or gradual loss of taste, we have lost any dislike which we had for our present design. So we thank the anonymous gramophile and beg his forgiveness; and if he cares to rend the veil of his identity he can have the sketch back.



SIR LANDON RONALD.

The Editor's Lectures

The paper read by Compton Mackenzie to the Musical Association on April 21st, 1925, on "The Gramophone: its Past, its Present, its Future," has been reprinted in the Proceedings of the fifty-first Session of the Association, and makes such good reading that we must find room for some extracts in a future issue.

The Editor will be giving several addresses in February, perhaps the most important being a lecture on Reading at the Mortimer Hall (93, Mortimer Street, London, W.) at 8.30 p.m., on the 4th, under the auspices of the National Book Council. Mr. Theodore Byard will be in the chair and applications for tickets should be sent to the Organising Secretary, 30, Little Russell Street, W.C.1. Subsequent lecturers in the series are Mr. C. R. Sanderson, Mr. Philip Guedalla, Mr. St. John Ervine, and Mr. Michael Sadleir.

Thoughts on Music

Everybody who has got a copy of Mr. Hervey Elwes' charming anthology of musical comments seems to have found in it the quality which persuaded us to publish it as our first venture in book form—a certain freshness in outlook. Mr. Elwes has collected from many unfrequented fields, and brought specimens into juxtaposition which wind threads of thought unobtrusively in the patchwork. It is a book put together with the same wisdom and humour that made Mr. Elwes' earlier "The Modern Child" so friendly and suggestive a volume.

Some of our correspondents have also praised the format of "Thoughts on Music"; the printing, paper, and binding are worthy of the thoughts. It is the sort of book which demands that you should buy two copies—one to keep and one to give away. But as we were at first diffident about the support of our readers in this venture, only a small first edition was prepared.

The Art Supplement

The engraving, which forms the Art Supplement this month, is by Delafosse (1764) of the painting by De Carmontelle. It is inscribed, "Leopold Mozart, Père de Marianne Mozart, Virtuose âgée de onze ans et de J. G. Wolfgang Mozart, Compositeur et Maître de Musique âgé de sept ans."

CORRESPONDENCE

De Gustibus Non Est Disputandum.

[All letters and manuscripts should be written on one side only of the paper and should be addressed to the Editor, *The Gramophone*, 58, Frith Street, London, W.1. The writer's full name and address must be given. A stamped envelope must be enclosed if an answer or the return of the manuscript is desired. The Editor wishes to emphasise the obvious fact that the publication of letters does not imply his agreement with the views expressed by correspondents.]

THE EDITOR AND MODERN MUSIC.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

SIR,—I was greatly interested in the little sermon you gave us in the December *GRAMOPHONE* about the lack of support which we gramophonists are alleged to be displaying towards the recording companies who are now providing us with great classics.

I think we all owe a debt of gratitude to the companies in providing the same, but there is another side to the apparent lack of support, and that is the high price of these records. I see Mr. Wm. Boosey, of New Bond Street and Queen's Hall, complained to Lord Crawford's Broadcasting Committee this week that the sales of gramophone records were being affected by listening-in. I think another great reason—and one of the main ones—is the high price which some of the recording companies charge for these.

The price is prohibitive to—I think I may say—the great majority of gramophone enthusiasts who thirst after the classics, but find that their limited means will not permit the paying of the high price asked. On your recommendation I obtained the *St. Paul's* suite for strings, which is a very fine piece, but it meant a sacrifice to pay for it. Other classics have to be passed over for the same reason.

Why don't the companies try the experiment of issuing cheaper classical records? It would no doubt mean a larger sale, and hence would recoup them for the small sales which now obtain. When issuing a complete work these should be sold at a fixed price for the set—which should be at a reduced rate from that of single records.

Unless the prices are lowered I can only see that a large number of gramophonists will be driven to patronising the companies who are now issuing really first-class classics at a more reasonable figure. A man with limited means cannot afford to pay out big sums for these records however much he may desire them.

In conclusion I trust you will continue to use your influence in trying to persuade the companies to meet the wishes of those who, like myself, would only be too pleased to purchase the classics if only issued at a more reasonable figure.

Chatham.

Yours truly,

H. H. SANFORD.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—I read Mr. Mackenzie's article in the December *GRAMOPHONE* with much interest. Luckily I was taking the *St. Paul's* suite home with me at the time, so my conscience was quite clear on that point. I also risked the Franck quartet as soon as it was issued, as I like Franck's music. But after all it is chiefly a matter of £ s. d. with most of us, and however much we want all these records we must perforce keep pace with our pockets. I have nearly 600 records, but am still without such desirable works as Elgar's No. 2 symphony, Mozart's third and fourth violin concertos, B flat and D minor quartets, Beethoven's Op. 59 No. 2 and Op. 18 Nos. 1 and 2 quartets, Tchaikovsky's fourth symphony and D major quartet, and six more Gilbert and Sullivan operas, nine Italian operas, etc., etc. If *THE GRAMOPHONE* could only influence the recording companies to reduce that 6s. 6d. record to a more reasonable figure, and more especially to get a substantial reduction on complete works of four or five discs upwards, I think they would soon find a big increase in their sale of "album" works.

I heartily endorse "Erlkönig's" request for *Lilac Time* complete, and, at the risk of repeating myself, ask for *The Immortal Hour*, *Hansel and Gretel* and *Perfect Fool*, each of which would make an admirable album.

By all means let us make a fuss, as Mr. Howarth suggests, and get this missing *Valkyrie* record (D.946) issued as soon as possible.

Would it not be possible for some authority, like Mr. Klein, to give us, one by one, a criticism of each of the nine Italian operas which are alleged to be recorded complete by the La Scala Opera

on Italian H.M.V.'s? I have heard two or three of the twenty *Faust* records, and the *Prologue* from *Pagliacci* (the *Prologue* really is, I think, complete), and they sound remarkably good for both orchestral tone and the singing. It would be very desirable, in getting one of these operas, to feel that one could ignore with equanimity the further issue of various snippets from that same opera by numerous red label celebrities which occurs with such monotonous regularity month by month; and any opera is much more interesting when one hears the same voices throughout, even if the language is unintelligible. I have *Madam Butterfly* complete on English H.M.V. and though the orchestra might be more telling, and though Tudor Davies is, at times, rather trying, yet I feel that I possess a most satisfactory performance of the opera, and I got rid of several "celebrity" records, which had become superfluous.

The price of these Italian records is 4s. 6d. for 12in. and 3s. for 10in., which is a very great consideration in a long opera, provided the rendering is really first-rate. The charge for the album is rather stiff (for instance 18s. for the twenty *Faust* records), but these records can be purchased separately. Why not start with *Faust* and *Aida*?

Muswell Hill.

Yours faithfully,

MAURICE W. BATEMAN.

THOSE COMPLETE WORKS.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—I notice in your widely read journal comments from correspondents relating to the high prices of the sets of records issued by the recording companies, which one cannot help but feel are excessive when compared to the prices charged for single records.

In this country (Tasmania) the H.M.V. Black Label (D series) are priced at 8s. each, so that when purchasing Beethoven's No. 9 *Choral Symphony* I had to pay £3 4s., which caused me to hesitate some time before securing this lovely work. You may consider the companies might be induced to make a reduction for sales of full sets as it would seem certain that if they did so it would lead to increased business.

Personally I find great satisfaction in these lengthy recordings, as do also many of my friends, but when one has to pay the full price for each record when buying the complete number, without any concession (art album excepted), it undoubtedly seems, to say the least of it, scarcely fair.

If anything can be done to obtain a reduction in price to buyers of full sets by your influence, I am sure you would have the gratitude of a great many lovers of good gramophone music.

Yours faithfully,

Hobart, Tasmania.

H. L. TAYLOR.

BUSINESS METHODS.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—Some time ago I went, at considerable inconvenience, to a recording company's own showrooms, owing to the difficulty of finding an agent for their records, and asked if I could have some records on approval. This I was told was not their custom. I replied that the list I had with me would take a couple of hours to play, and I had not that amount of time to spare, either that day or on any other during their hours of business. Result: no business done.

The other day I visited the headquarters of another company for the same reason, again going out of my way to do so. In their case I knew very little about them, as they do not advertise in *THE GRAMOPHONE*, and not much anywhere else, so far as I have noticed, and had had to consult the London Directory to find out their address, in order to write for a catalogue. Having climbed two flights of stairs, I asked for a particular record, which happened to be out of stock. This was on a Friday. I was assured it would be in on the following day. I said I would call on Monday. As it happened I was unable, but did so on Tuesday. Having again climbed the two flights of stairs, and having waited while another customer was served (not that I can complain of this, of course), I asked about my record. A prolonged search ensued, after which I was told it was not there. Again, no business done. Further, I abandoned my intention of asking about other items I had noticed in their catalogue, hoping that what I want will before long be recorded by one of the companies whose records I can get without trouble—readers can probably guess where! I may as well mention that this firm also declines to let one have records on approval.

London.

Yours truly,

N. O. M. CAMERON.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—Readers of THE GRAMOPHONE will, I think, agree that the average gramophone shop is not at all a convenient or suitable place in which to hear records played over before purchasing. It is true that some of the more enterprising traders have constructed audition rooms for their customers' use, but they are the exception rather than the rule, and it is the *average* establishment of which I am now writing.

In the majority of shops one has frequently to stand in a jostling crowd of would-be purchasers each awaiting their turn to be attended, while the proprietor of the establishment, or his assistant, waxes impatient that one should desire to hear both sides of a record played right through. In an atmosphere such as that described it is practically impossible for one to appreciate the music one has asked to hear or even to decide whether or not one likes the record, and doubtless many of us say "I'll have that one, please," rather than keep the impatient proprietor and his customers in further suspense while one hears the record in its entirety. Yet it is, to many, if not all enthusiastic gramophiles, a most important matter to ascertain whether a record finishes well and is without blemish throughout. Quite apart from this, is it not desirable to hear records for the first time in relatively secluded, or at any rate peaceful surroundings, and without undue hurry?

We do not expect these establishments to be furnished as drawing-rooms, but there should, in my opinion, be some effort made to provide potential buyers of records or gramophones with the seclusion that is necessary if one is to hear them played over for the first time in order to make a decision forthwith. Are the proprietors of these establishments so lacking in foresight as to be unable to appreciate the undoubted fact that a few pounds spent in the reconstruction of their showrooms would in a relatively short time be recouped by increased sales?—it would appear to be so, speaking generally.

Readers of THE GRAMOPHONE advertisement columns will know that one or two firms are now sending records on approval (with certain stipulations) so that one may play them over in the peace and comfort of one's own home, and, what is perhaps more important, on one's own instrument.

Surely this is the ideal method. I do not hesitate to say that if one proposes to spend upwards of £1 in records, it is a tremendous temptation to employ this method of purchase, rather than patronise the average shop where precious records are sold with less ceremony than a bottle of proprietary medicine in a chemist's stores.

Finsbury Park, N.

Yours truly,
LEONARD H. STRINGER.

BORODIN.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

SIR,—In an article on Some Unrecorded Orchestral Works in your issue of May last, Mr. Biss pressed the claims of Borodin's second symphony. Can you not press for the recording of this work? The last time it was played at the "Proms." in 1924, it was given a tremendous reception.

I see too, that in Notes and Queries for March last a correspondent urges the claims of Borodin's *Quartet in A*. There appears to be some demand for this composer's work.

Yours faithfully,
Camberley. G. O. TURNBULL.

RECORDS AND REVIEWS.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—If you will allow me to comment on K. K.'s voluminous reply to my criticisms, perhaps it will clear the air a little if I admit that I fully appreciate the tone of his letter and reciprocate the sentiments contained in its last paragraph. If we differ "let us fight like little gentlemen." K. K.'s main contention amounts to this, that he questions the right of an amateur, like myself, to criticise the efforts of a trained musician, like himself. Now the "bearing of this observation lays in the application on it," because I would remind him that the points on which I ventured to differ from him in regard to a certain set of records had reference, not to their musical contents, but rather to their technical qualities, and that as he asks me to defer to his trained efficiency as a critic of the music I may with equal reason ask him to concede that, within such narrow limits, over 12 years of almost daily study and experiment in reproduction might perhaps entitle me to claim that I did not approach that side of the question as an altogether untrained man. I am fortunate in

the friendship of a good many of the "old hands," and feel sure that they would support my contention that the power of judging records, as of getting the best out of them, is largely acquired by practice and long experience of a great number of records played under various conditions. All that I asked of the reviewers was that they should not allow their erudition to blind them to the fact that the gramophone has a special public, many of whom would like them to mention the recording. N. P., in one of his reviews this month, contends that this would necessitate "an almost bar to bar reference to the score." Why this is just the sort of thing which I had the temerity to deprecate. With no desire to institute invidious comparisons, I would instance the article on the Mozart records by Mr. Francis E. Terry in the December number, which presents such a model of what I have in mind, that it would be almost an affectation not to do so. Here in each case you have a short but lucid description of the general character of the work itself, and a criticism of the playing and recording based on a broad estimate—i.e., an assurance that the violins do not sound all through like flutes or the piano chords like someone upsetting a pail. Last, but not least, he specifies the equipment which he used in arriving at his conclusions, a splendid idea because it enables others to judge more or less what effect they are likely to obtain if they happen to use, say, a less romantic sound-box or a more romantic instrument.

There is no finality in opinions on matters relating to this fascinating pursuit, and we need none of us despair of constant improvement, unless we are unwilling or unable to take advice, or profit from the experience of others, whether trained or only practised.

Purley.

Yours very truly,

LIONEL GILMAN.

["K. K." replies:—I want heartily to assure Mr. Gilman that I fully appreciate the value of his twelve years' listening and experimenting. What I took exception to, I must remind your readers, was this, the end of his December letter: "I doubt whether the reviewer of the latest Lener realises that in his enthusiasm for Beethoven's work he has been far too kind to the playing and recording, which are of the feeblest. Even the recording of the first violin is nothing great, while the rest of the members of the quartet are like Kempenfelt's brave men, 'all sunk beneath the wave.'" Now that is sheer exaggeration, and I am willing to abide by the opinion of any dozen skilled listeners, amateur or professional, as to those specific points. My objection was to Mr. Gilman's presuming that my "enthusiasm for the composer" had got in the way of my accurate judgment of the recording. Whether the judgment be accurate or not, I think it ought not to be impugned on that ground. Perhaps Mr. Gilman meant kindly when he attributed what he considers a defect in me, to love for the music. But does he not see that that attribution implies that I haven't been properly trained to weigh things up? Really, that is all I took exception to; but I also took the occasion, pursuing matters outside that immediately at issue, to try to show what a musician's training should be, to explain, as far as I see it, what is necessary even before one can criticise recording properly. I am completely with Mr. Gilman when he says there is no finality in this. Indeed, I go much farther than some and say that it is very doubtful how far we are able at present to criticise performances (and particularly those of strange works) from the disc, whatever equipment be used.

To take up Mr. Gilman's other point. He asks the reviewers "to mention the recording." Good heavens! When have we not mentioned it? He instances Mr. Terry's admirable notes. Do not your reviewers, with very few exceptions indeed, say as much about the recording as does Mr. Terry? I have read through his December article again and feel sure that, as far as I am concerned, I can declare with full truth that, taking any month's notes, I say more about recording than an equal bulk of that article does. Mr. Gilman, unintentionally, perhaps, seems to be supposing that we don't say much about the recording. The careful reader will not support him there, I feel sure. We say as much as we possibly can gather in the extremely narrow limits both of space and time within which we work. Mr. Gilman examines at leisure. Let him work under reviewing conditions, and I think he would admit that your reviewers get to know about as much about the records as humanly can be known in the time available.

A final point, that I would gently but firmly urge. No amount of listening, however careful, is sufficient for a clear judgment unless one has had a musical training, and can say what the composer wanted, and whether he wrote it down in the best way; that is, how far his scoring can be expected to "come off." One *must* know the score before a satisfactory judgment of the performance can be

formed. As I suggested last month, one should also have a background of wide knowledge of the composer's style and his experience in the particular type of music under discussion. These, I suggested, are things that come into the every-day training of the musician, but not usually into the amateur's ken in any complete way. They are vital for a full judgment. Much can be done by the careful man who is experienced in listening; but I take it one may reasonably presume the average amateur has not had the special training I mention. That being so, I respectfully but firmly reiterate that, other things being equal, the trained man's judgment is likely to be nearer perfection than that of the untrained man. How far from perfection's sacred height he remains, when all is said and done, no professional man who has had the nonsense knocked out of him by proper training can for a moment fail to realise. May I assure Mr. Gilman with all sincerity that I do fully realise the gap between aspiration and attainment; and also that no disagreement, on whatever subject it may be, shall stand in the way of my doing my best to profit by—and my being always very glad to have—the opinions of careful and keen amateurs such as himself.]

THE NEW H.M.V.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—Following Mr. Mackenzie's suggestion in December (page 304) as to an essay on the question of the vocal reproduction of the new instrument, Mr. Wilson has given us this month an excellent exposition of the subject, and on the opposite page appears the report of the expert committee, which follows a very similar line of argument to his. After duly appreciating the comprehensive and careful tests carried out, I cannot but think that, to some extent at least, the part played by the system of amplification or resonance adopted in the new machine has been overlooked, and should, therefore, like to submit some views on this matter. From the two articles above referred to it will be obvious to all that the greater the number of overtones or "upper partials" reinforcing the fundamental note, the greater is the brilliance of tone, and *vice versa*.

The Editor in his criticism observes the following important points: 1. The bass is brought out *without* sacrificing the treble. 2. Tone is open and forward. 3. Volume and resonance are unsurpassed. 4. It helps the moderate singers, but hurts the best, irrespective of the type of voice, by imparting to the voices unnatural resonance.

In the letter of Mr. Wilson, and the report of the Committee, the chief argument used to explain the difference between vocal and instrumental reproduction is that the larger sound-box "suppresses the upper register," whilst at the same time emphasising the lower. This view does not coincide with the Editor's observation No. 1.

So far as I have been able to judge from a cursory test, it appears that there is added resonance which is fairly uniform throughout the scale (this also seems to be Mr. Mackenzie's opinion), and that could not very well be the case if the tones at one end were improved at the expense of those at the other; unequal increase in resonance would result.

Moreover observation No. 4 would be erroneous if there was a marked disproportion in the overtones. The moderate voices, which are already somewhat deficient in overtones, would become even less resonant, and thus hindered; the good voices would still suffer, but from "under" and not "over" resonance.

On the contrary, more resonance is observed, so that the ordinary voices are improved, but the good ones, which are already rich in overtones, are "over-resonated."

This would seem to indicate that the overtones are being correctly reproduced at their source, and then somewhat obliterated as a result of the type of resonator or amplifier employed in the instrument.

It is rather interesting to note that Captain Barnett, in his "Review of the Year," touches on this very point when he blames the saxophone type of horn on the new H.M.V. for the "trumpet-like reinforcement of overtones."

On the other hand, it will be seen that he favours the large sound-box, with correct scale balance.

I do not think my ideas are in any way antagonistic to the statement of Lord Rayleigh quoted in the report, and my desire in giving them expression is to draw attention to an aspect of the matter which apparently would largely tend to explain the comparatively unsuccessful reproduction of vocal tone, which was the main feature of the Editor's criticism.

Yours faithfully,

A. T. NEWTON.

Leeds.

NEW RECORDINGS.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—It is difficult to read with patience such letters as appeared in your January issue on the *Parsifal* records. The very important part which criticism must inevitably play in the development of new methods of recording should make us very jealous that it is exercised fairly, intelligently, and constructively. The querulous moanings that appeared in your last issue are neither fair, intelligent, nor constructive. Such criticism is squint-eyed. The people who indulge in it cannot see the wood because the particular trees they want are not there. I leave it to your readers to judge whether a person who has heard the *Parsifal* records and can only find it in himself to write as one of your correspondents has done is doing anything to help the good work of improving the gramophone. It is not your correspondent's fault-finding that I complain of, but the fact that he has not paid even the most grudging of tributes to the splendid work that has been put into the production of these records. I can say with the most literal truth that the effect of the *Parsifal* records on me when I first heard them was stunning. So tremendous was the advance, speaking in a general sense, on all previous orchestral records of the same class that I could hardly believe my ears. Regarded from the point of view of ensemble effect the massed brilliance and richness of tone, the superb onward sweep of the orchestra, the magnificent volume (amazingly unmarred by blasting) the extremely beautiful quality of the choral work fully justify one in using the word realistic to describe the recording. The most satisfying thing, indeed, about these records was the totally new impression which they gave of confidence, freedom, and power. One unconsciously endows the gramophone with a sort of personality, and until I heard these records the chief characteristic of that personality for me was its lack of confidence in itself. Nervousness being contagious it created in me in turn a mood of anxiety which has always marred my enjoyment of its best work. With the *Parsifal* records it cast aside fear and inspired by its courage, I, too, forget to be anxious and am swept along on the magnificent rush of sound. I have no hesitation in saying that these records not only leave all other orchestral records far behind, but they are quite definitely a new thing, and I further say most emphatically that when dealing with an achievement of this kind generous appreciation should precede captious fault-finding. It is dangerous to be dogmatic in matters of taste, but if it is not a fundamental law of all criticism that the all-round general impression which a work leaves should be the chief determining factor in one's judgment of the work, then criticism has no fundamental laws and is merely a game of blind man's buff. This letter does not pretend to be a balanced criticism of the *Parsifal* records; it is merely intended as a corrective to what appeared in your last issue, and it will, of course, be understood that words like "realism" must always be taken in a very relative sense. I do not want people who have never heard these records to be scared away by lynx-eyed comment and I feel it would be disastrous to the future of the gramophone if really brilliant work like this were not to be given an encouraging reception. I am not blind to the faults of the *Parsifal* records; I know that one often finds it difficult to discern the strings in the loud passages, that this is in part due to distortion of tone quality, and that either the playing or the recording is responsible at times for giving the music a rather too robust full-bloodedness. I am aware of all these defects and of others too, but I am also aware that in these records the His Master's Voice Co. have hurled an exhilarating mass of sound at us which a year ago could not have been recorded without creating such an orgy of blasting (not confined to the gramophone) and shrieking as would probably have left the Company open to a prosecution for a breach of the peace. That is not everything, but it is something and a very big something. I have no patience with people who have no patience, who want everything or nothing. The history of mechanical and technical development shows that by some law of psychology or economics, or of both combined, progress can only proceed by a series of shorter or longer pushes, one at a time, along parallel lines. The H.M.V. Co. have shown in these *Parsifal* records what can be done in the recording of massed sound; the next step will be to restore whatever has been sacrificed by the new process whilst retaining the splendid volume of comparatively pure sound which has been achieved. I may say (*pace*, Mr. Wilson) that, if one must choose between the two, I am, within understandable limits, all for volume and brilliance and energy as against a finicky fidelity in instrumental quality. And after all it is stating the issue falsely to make the question one between volume and fidelity. The sacrifice of volume and ensemble effect, not to mention of bass resonance,

constitute in my opinion a greater heresy from the faith of realism than the sacrifice of tone-quality in some of the higher instruments, especially when one remembers (though it seems to have been completely forgotten) that the whole harmonic system is built on the bass. It is a case of faith unfaithful keeping falsely true. You observe I have shifted over to the controversy on the new H.M.V. machine, but I may say I seem to sense a natural alliance between the critics of the *Parsifal* records and the opponents of the No. 4 instrument. Lest I may be drawn further into the quagmire I will conclude by repeating that I love these *Parsifal* records (though I don't happen to be very fond of *Parsifal*) that they are probably the first things I would rush to save if my house went on fire and that all those of your readers who are not Quid-Nuncs or How-Nows or What-Nots will find that if they buy them they will have secured the best all-round records at present on the market.

Kildare.

Yours faithfully,

JOHN J. DUNNE.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

SIR,—The letters that have recently appeared in THE GRAMOPHONE concerning the new process of recording and its results, prompt me to venture a suggestion that some at least of the unpleasant noise described by your correspondents may perhaps be due to the way in which the records are played and not so much to the records themselves. So far as my experience of the new recording goes—notably with the *Parsifal* records and especially with *Klingsor's Magic Garden*, referred to by Mr. Leslie Gunston—if played with a sound-box of not less than 2 inches diameter (2½ inches is not too large) and a fibre needle, these records are magnificent; all the light and shade, the *forte* and *piano* passages, are rendered with an uncanny fidelity and the strings are quite natural. But with an "Exhibition" or any other small, sharp, brilliant box and steel needles, they are almost unbearable. The Gramophone Company are evidently aware of this, hence the large No. 4 box. And let some unwary person try one of the new process choral records with loud steel needles and a small box; the result will be so disappointing that he would naturally jump to the conclusion that the new recording was a failure. But if such records—or all of the new process records for that matter—are only played with a suitable sound-box and suitable needles, then they are revealed as the great improvement they undoubtedly are.

London, S.W.12.

Yours faithfully,

J. T. FISHER.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—During the last year the recording of the pianoforte has made enormous strides. No longer do we get that indefinite sort of tone that made the older records so unsatisfactory. The new records are improved even to the point of realism and to-day we find that the stage reached in pianoforte reproduction is, relatively speaking, in advance of that of the orchestra.

With regard to the orchestra, there is still much shade work to be done. Although the new H.M.V. instrument "produced the goods" as far as the brass and bass instruments generally are concerned, the lack of balance of tone, which is the bane of the orchestral record, has not been improved one whit, rather has it been accentuated by the fact that undue prominence has been given to certain instruments while others have been distorted in a most unnatural way. The *Rienzi Overture*, for instance, comes out well owing to the preponderance of trumpets and horns, but the average orchestral record on this machine is not a success. We do not hear the strings as strings. Their tone is permeated with an unnatural reedy effect which is not unlike the saxophone of fox-trot fame. The violin perhaps suffers worst, it loses its natural tone completely and is turned into a hybrid which is neither fish, flesh, nor good red herring!

I would venture to say that whatever gramophone is used the lack of violin tone will never be remedied until more of these instruments are used in the making of orchestral records, for a reduced number, however advantageously placed in the recording room, can never make up for the adequate volume of tone that is associated with the strings of the full orchestra. Of course, the question of numbers and varieties of instruments that may be effectively employed is one of research.

Returning to the subject of pianoforte records, one could not wish for a better recording of the Brahms-Paganini *Variations* issued by the H.M.V. last October. These two records are perfect in every way; in fact they represent the high-water mark of reproduction and playing. We want more records like them, why not some of the bigger works of Chopin or Liszt, such as the

sonatas and polonaises for a start, and the Tchaikovsky and Rachmaninoff second concertos (the latter in its complete form at a reasonable price).

One cannot help thinking that Columbia were ill-advised to embark on the first Beethoven concerto as a first attempt to record this class of work. May I point out that Beethoven was but 24 years old when he composed it, and although it contains unmistakable signs of genius, it is not to be compared with his later works, which are endowed with such rare grandeur and beauty. Beethoven was no prodigy as a youth; before 1795, when the concerto was composed, he was only known as a pianist, and had attracted notice in that capacity by his concert playing in Vienna. Much the same thing applies to the Mendelssohn *G minor Concerto* which was recorded last winter. To my mind the work represents Mendelssohn at his very worst. It was written when he was 20 years of age, one of his first serious efforts, and has been described as a "vapid and colourless outpouring that flows on to the end."

There is undoubtedly a growing demand for the right kind of pianoforte music, not "snippets," but well-chosen works that are worthy of the instrument. Would it not be possible to start a competition in your very excellent journal on the same lines as the concerto competition, so as to give the record companies some idea as to what is required in this direction?

I am, yours truly,

Norbury.

LESLIE HILL.

RECORDS OF 1925.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—This letter is in reply to your question in this month's GRAMOPHONE: "How much do you spend a year on records, etc.?" I do not have the opportunity of hearing records before I buy, and I generally buy half a dozen together, and bring one out every week, on a particular day, as in this way, besides keeping a check on one's expenditure, there is some pleasure in anticipating the record every week. I have to cater for the various musical tastes of the household, but as they are, with one or two exceptions, all selected from recommendations in your paper, I am sending you a list of records purchased in 1925 as it might be of interest:

JANUARY.

1. H.M.V., D.B.100:—*Farewell and Death of Boris*: Th. Chaliapine. 2. H.M.V., D.B.257:—*Ah! fors' è lui che l'anima* (*Traviata*) (Verdi) and *Caro nome che il mio cor* (*Rigoletto*) (Verdi): A. Galli-Curci. 3. H.M.V., E.204:—*Sonata in A major* (Scarlatti) and *Sonata in D major* (Scarlatti): Mrs. V. G. Woodhouse (harpsichord). 4. H.M.V., D.A.304:—*Mother Machree* (Olcott) and *Molly Brannigan* (Tucker): John McCormack. 5. Parlophone E.10163:—*Porgi amor, qualche ristoro* and *Dove sono* from *Aria of the Countess* (*Figaro*) (Mozart): Emmy Heckmann-Bettendorf.

FEBRUARY.

1. H.M.V., D.A.457:—*O cease thy singing, maiden fair* (Rachmaninoff) and *When night descends* (Rachmaninoff): John McCormack. 2. Parlophone E.10169 and E.10170:—*Tannhäuser Overture* (Wagner): Opera House Orchestra conducted by Dr. Ed. Moerike. 3. Parlophone E.10172:—*Invitation to the Waltz* (Weber): Opera House Orchestra conducted by Dr. Weissmann. 4. Columbia L.1119:—*Songs my mother taught me* (Dvorák) and (a) *O mistress mine*, (b) *Fair house of joy* (Quilter): Gervase Elwes.

MARCH.

1. Columbia L.1159, L.1160, L.1561:—*Quartet in D major*, Op. 76 (Haydn): Lemer String Quartet. 2. Dance records. 3. Vocalion X.9502:—*The Rebel* from *Freebooters' Songs* (Wallace) and (a) *Old clothes and fine clothes*, (b) *Full fathom five*: John Buckley. 4. Vocalion D.02122:—*L'Après-midi d'un faune* (Debussy): Aeolian Orchestra.

APRIL.

1. H.M.V., D.A.321:—*Down the Petersky and Dubinushka* (Russian songs): Th. Chaliapine. 2. H.M.V., D.B.258:—*Lo! here the gentle lark* (Bishop) and *Echo song* (Bishop): Amelita Galli-Curci. 3. H.M.V., D.675:—*Sabbath morning at sea* (Elgar) and *The swimmer* (Elgar) (Sea Pictures): Leila Megane. 4. Vocalion R.6097:—*Melody in F* (Rubinstein) and *La Chasse* (Carter): Lionel Tertis.

MAY.

1. H.M.V., D.A.498:—*Dai campi, dai prati* (*Mefistofele*) (Boito) and *Questa o quella* (*Rigoletto*) (Verdi): John McCormack. 2. H.M.V., D.934, 935, 936:—*Unfinished Symphony* (Schubert): R.A.H. Orchestra conducted by Sir Landon Ronald. 3. Vocalion

R.6144 :—*La Danza (Tarantella Napolitana)* and *When the swallows homeward fly* (Cowen): Olga Haley. 4. Vocalion A.0220 :—*An die Musik* (Schubert) and *Sapphische Ode* (Brahms): Elena Gerhardt. 5. H.M.V., D.A.308 :—*Take, oh take those lips away* (Bennett) and *Beneath the moon of Lombardy* (Craxton): John McCormack.

JUNE.

1. H.M.V., D.A.636 :—*I saw from the beach* (arr. H. Hughes) and *Padraic the Fiddler* (Larchet): John McCormack. 2. Parlophone E.10238 :—*Adagio in D major* (Bach) and *Ave Maria* (Gounod-Bach): Emanuel Feuermann. 3. H.M.V., D.B.449 :—*Open the gates of the Temple* (Knapp) and *Be thou faithful (St. Paul)* (Mendelssohn): Evan Williams. 4. H.M.V., B.1948 :—*Passione (Ranzato)* and *A thing of dreams (The First Kiss)*: De Groot and the Piccadilly Orchestra.

JULY.

1. H.M.V., D.K.108 :—*Halte là: qui va là? (Carmen)* (Bizet) and *C'est toi! L'on m'avait avertie (Carmen)* (Bizet): Farrar and Martinelli. 2. H.M.V., 59 :—*Clair de lune* (Debussy) and *Jardins sous la pluie* (Debussy): B. Moiseivitch. 3. Columbia 961 :—*I belong to Glasgow and I'm ninety-four to-day*: Will Fyffe. 4. Vocalion 02044 and 02054 :—*Trio in B flat, Op. 99* (Schubert): Sammons, Tertis, and Hobday.

AUGUST.

1. H.M.V., D.A.101 :—*Ave signor (Mefistofele)* (Boito) and *Vi ravviso, o luoghi (Sonnambula)* (Bellini): Th. Chaliapine. 2. H.M.V., E.361 :—*Isabel* (Bridge) and *It was in the merry month of May* (I. O. Roberts): Leila Megane. 3. Columbia 1007 :—*Le Cygne* (Saint-Saëns) and *Berceuse de Jocelyn* (Godard): W. H. Squire. 4. Columbia 994 :—*The Mikado Selection* (Sullivan): Court Symphony Orchestra. 5. Columbia 7354 :—*Eri tu che machiavi (Una Ballo in Maschera)* (Verdi) and *Il balen de suo sorriso (Il Trovatore)* (Verdi): R. Stracciari.

SEPTEMBER.

1. H.M.V., D.A.680 :—*To the Children* (Rachmaninoff) and *How fair this spot* (Rachmaninoff): John McCormack. 2. Columbia 9016 :—*Blue Danube Waltz* (J. Strauss) and *Valse Bleue* (Margis): Savoy Havana Band. 3. Vocalion X.9561 :—*Who is Sylvia?* (Schubert) and *A Ball-room meeting* (Tchaikovsky): Olga Haley. 4. H.M.V., D.M.105 :—*O, Mimi, tu più non torni (Bohème)* (Puccini) and *Solenne in quest' ora (Forza del Destino)* (Verdi): Caruso and Scotti.

OCTOBER.

1. H.M.V., 502 :—*Götterdämmerung (Siegfried's Funeral March)* (Wagner): R.A.H. Orchestra conducted by Sir Landon Ronald. 2. H.M.V., D.B.635 :—*Altra notte in fondo (Mefistofele)* (Boito) and *Ella a fui (Contes d'Hoffmann)* (Offenbach): Frances Alda. 3. Parlophone E.10250 :—*Rozsika* (Leopoldi) and *The ladies of Prague* (Leopoldi): Marek Weber and his Orchestra. 4. Vocalion A.0232 :—*Come not when I am dead* (Holbrooke) and *Sigh no more, ladies* (Stevens): John Coates.

NOVEMBER.

1. Parlophone 10100 :—*Der Rosenkavalier Waltz* (R. Strauss): Marek Weber and his Orchestra. 2. Parlophone 20000 :—*Innocentes (Mariezo)* and *Ave Maria* (Vittoria): Sistine Vatican Choir. 3. H.M.V., D.A.693 :—*When you and I were seventeen* (Rosoff) and *I look into your garden* (Haydn Wood): John McCormack. 4. Velvet Face 1099 :—*Minuet from Suite in D minor* (Mozart) and *The Ash Grove (Llwyn Onn)*: M. Zacharewitsch. 5. Columbia L.1489-L.1492 :—*Symphony No. 6 (Pathetic)* (Tchaikovsky): New Queen's Hall Orchestra conducted by Sir H. Wood.

DECEMBER.

1. Aco. G.15756 :—*Un Blodeugwm o Bleserau* (Parry), David Brazell and Cwm Rhonda (Hughes), Mixed Welsh Quartette. 2. Aco. G.15699 :—*Serenade Espagnole* (Chaminade) and *Melodie* (Tchaikovsky): Peggy Cochrane. 3. Parlophone E.10332 :—*O Princess and What worlds outspread before me* (Act II., scene 2, *Tannhäuser*) (Wagner): E. Heckmann-Bettendorf and L. Melchior. 4. Columbia 3546 :—*Faery Song (Immortal Hour)* (Boughton) and *The Minstrel* (Easthope Martin): William Heselstine.

Now if I was allowed to keep only twelve records I should select the following in order of preference:

1, 2, and 3. H.M.V., D.934, 935, and 936 :—*Unfinished Symphony* (Schubert): R.A.H. Orchestra conducted by Sir L. Ronald. 4. H.M.V., D.A.538 :—*O cease thy singing* and *When night descends*: John McCormack. 5. H.M.V., D.B.257 :—*Ah! fors' è lui che l'anima* and *Caro Nome*: Galli-Curci. 6. Columbia L.1160 :—*Largo from Quartet in D major* (Haydn): Lener String Quartet.

7. H.M.V., D.M.105 :—*O, Mimi tu più non torni* and *Solenne in quest' ora*: Caruso and Scotti. 8. Parlophone E.10238 :—*Adagio in D major* (Bach) and *Ave Maria* (Bach-Gounod): Emanuel Feuermann. 9. H.M.V., D.A.498 :—*Dai campi, dai prati* (Boito) and *Questa o quella* (Verdi): John McCormack. 10. Vocalion X.9561 :—*Who is Sylvia?* and *A ball-room meeting*: Olga Haley. 11. H.M.V., D.B.100 :—*Farewell and Death of Boris*: Chaliapine. 12. Parlo. E.10100 :—*Der Rosenkavalier Waltz*: Marek Weber and his Orchestra.

If confined to £5 I should add to the above the Alda record, the duets from *Carmen*, by Farrar and Martinelli, and the McCormack record, *To the children and How fair this spot*.

Altogether there are 61 records, and the total cost was £17 10s. If I had left their purchase until now I should save 2s.

Yours faithfully,

Denbigh.

(Dr.) LLOYD-HUGHES.

The Diary

It is a little late in the year to recommend a diary; but that which is issued by Messrs. G. D. Ernest and Co. (the publishers of the excellent *Music Trades Review*) and called "The Music Trade's Diary, Year Book and Directory," is well worth buying at 2s. 6d. in cloth or 2s. in a paper cover, even as an addition to other diaries. It contains a mass of information, most of which is of interest to gramophonists—addresses, patents, copyright regulations, and so on—and is thoroughly well got up.

* * *

The Linguaphone

A useful addition to the equipment of anyone who is learning languages by means of the records issued by the Linguaphone Institute is a "patent repeater," which can be fixed so that any difficult passage can be played over and over again till it is mastered, without the annoyance of having to find the exact place in the record every time. This gadget, the invention of Mr. J. Roston, Principal of the Linguaphone Institute, has been given to our Expert Committee to test; but at first sight it looks as if it might be a boon to anyone who uses the gramophone for instructional purposes.

* * *

Gramophone Service

The correspondence pages this month include two letters about the way in which the prospective buyer is sometimes hampered by the inefficiency of the seller of gramophone records. The writers are justified in their indictment; for it is common knowledge that the average establishment is run so badly that nothing but the excessive zeal of the gramophonic public can account for its commercial existence. Surely it is high time that our readers began to insist on better service. They can tell us the names of gramophone shops where they have found efficiency and courtesy, and though we do not promise to publish a list, we can use the information in such a way that gradually the custom of our other readers is concentrated on to the houses of good service. Experience, as our earlier readers may remember, has shown that Messrs. Imhof are much praised; they got about 90 per cent. of the votes in an identification competition held some months ago; we have never had a complaint about them from any reader, and the fact that they are the sole metropolitan agents for Polydor records has made the cheerful little salon at 110 New Oxford Street a centre of attraction. This is as it should be; the little extra touch of promptness, intelligence, and courtesy has won its reward. But there is not room for all our readers at Messrs. Imhof's at once; and the recent extension of "audition cubicles" at the H.M.V. show-rooms in Oxford Street and at Keith Prowse's in Bond Street has made both of them more satisfying to the gramophiler. Then there are Messrs. Chappell's Cliftophone saloons in Bond Street, Messrs. Murdoch's in Oxford Street, and that fascinating farrago of seductions, the Gramophone Exchange, in New Oxford Street—all of them within five minutes of our London Office and all of them, we make bold to assert, offering first-class service to any comer—especially if he or she mentions THE GRAMOPHONE.

If the provinces are equally well served, let us hear of it! There is no reason why any reader should ever be disappointed or neglected, and we shall be glad to take up the cudgels to make the West End of London standard an all-England standard.

NOTES AND QUERIES

[Each comment or question should be written clearly on a separate slip of paper and addressed to THE GRAMOPHONE, 58, Frith Street, W. 1, as early as possible in the month. Full name and address must in all cases be given for reference.]

(379) **A Sad Surrender.**—I recently asked a friend if he was still reading THE GRAMOPHONE. He had given it up because he found it too "expensive." The last number he read had made him spend £4 on records.—J. H., Colne, Lancs.

(380) **Best Record.**—I shall be extremely obliged if any reader could tell me the best recording of Liszt's "Third Nocturne in A flat," played as a pianoforte solo?—D. W. C., Salisbury.

(381) **Enigma Variations.**—In the H.M.V. version of "Enigma Variations," second disc (D.582) the speed should be 80... For some reason they come out particularly well on the gramophone and ought to be known to every enthusiast.—"Old Hill."

(382) **Scriabine and Others.**—Are there any records of Scriabine's symphonies (other than "Poème de l'Extase"), of Prokofiev's music (especially the concerto), or of Stravinsky's "Sacre du Printemps"—or any of Schönberg?—"Ignoramus," Oxford.

[No, except the last, whose string sextet, "Verklärte Nacht" has been issued to members of the N.G.S.—Ed.]

(383) **Speeds of Records.**—What are the correct speeds for the following makes of records? Parlophone (78), Zonophone (78) Velvet Face (80), Vocalion (80), Aco (80), Polydor (mostly 80, see N. and Q. 367), Fonotipia (78), Vox (80), Odeon (78), Brunswick (80), Duophone (80), Beltona (80), Homochord (80), Actuelle (80), Victor (78), Imperial (80), Pathé (80).—H. P., Holyhead.

[The usually accepted speeds are given in brackets, but there are no doubt exceptions, especially among Parlophone, Odeon, and Fonotipia records.—Ed.]

(384) **Best Versions.**—Can you tell me which of the following is the best rendering of "Siegfried's Funeral March" (Wagner): (a) Columbia L.1522; (b) H.M.V., D.502; and (c) Parlophone 10158. [H.M.V.—Piccolo.] And the "Hungarian March" from "Faust" (Berlioz): (a) Columbia L.1405 and L.1105; (b) H.M.V., D.151; (c) Vocalion D.02115; and (d) Parlophone E.10345.—D. W. C., Salisbury.

(385) **Military Band Music.**—To the list of military band records mentioned by your correspondent Mr. Rainford, in the December number, should be added the "First Suite in E flat," by Gustav Holst, played by the Grenadier Guards on two 10in. Columbias (3260 and 3261). I recommend them to any readers who want something really "highbrow" at a reasonable price. The March on part three is very inspiring.—T. O'H., Broadstairs.

ANSWERS TO QUERIES

[Answers must be written on separate slips and should be forwarded to THE GRAMOPHONE, 58, Frith Street, London, W. 1, as early in the month as possible.]

(351) **Organ Records.**—Some organ records are not disappointing. Try J. J. McClellan (Columbia 1704), 3s.—H. P., Holyhead.

(353) **Ghost Voices.**—I think I remember being told that Albert Coates shouted a cue to the players in the last disc (side 2) of "The Twilight of the Gods." He may, as suggested, have shouted "Horns!" But Mr. Coates sometimes drops into Russian, in which case the word would sound in English something like "Rozhok!" with the second syllable accented. In any case there would be a fierce gesture to the instruments concerned, the ejaculation being involuntary.—J. F. P., S.E.24.

(353) **Ghost Voices.**—The voice in the last record of the "Twilight of the Gods" is not that of Mr. Coates shouting "Horns!" but is that of Hagen crying "Back from the ring!" as he rushes into the flood after the ring which is being borne away by the Rhine-daughters.—S. S. M., Worcester.

(355) **Needles.**—I find that the loud Chromic needle does wear records substantially and particularly when used at a needle

angle of 45°. I strongly advise you not to use one ten times. It is much safer to use it only once. Needles are cheap and records expensive. Why hesitate?—P. W., Putney.

(355) **Needles.**—The Chromic loud needles wear records less than the best loud steel needles of the "once only" type. I believe from tests that it is quite safe to use these needles ten times, but I always leave an extra margin of safety and use them for seven 12in. records.—R. T., Rathnew.

(360) **Piano Records.**—I don't agree at all. It is the new system of recording that produces that extraordinary tone that in certain places gives the effect of an entirely new instrument. I tried to achieve natural tone by fibres on a gramophone that is admitted by all my friends to do justice to piano records; and the telephonic clang persisted.—J. C. W. C., S.W. 2.

(363) **Best Version.**—"Air for G String" (Bach) for violin, H.M.V., 3-7966, by Kubelik, 10in. Thoroughly satisfactory, too, is Col. 3149, by James Levey.—J. C. W. C., S.W. 2.

(370, 371) **Fibres.**—To prevent breaking of points use a heavily tensioned sound-box such as H.M.V. No. 2 and No. 1 Luxus, etc. These boxes can be finely tensioned and adjusted to prevent break-downs entirely; graduated diaphragms that are stiffened in the centre give much better results than flat ones that are flabby in the centre. Flat diaphragms are useless with fibres, graduated ones prevent break-downs, and give more volume and a more even balance of tone; they bring out the bass as well as the treble. Try a little outward pull on the diaphragm to stiffen the centre slightly or have a Murdoch hand-bevelled mica fitted; the hand-bevelled mica, properly fitted in one of above boxes, will play through any record if the fibres are of good quality; the best fibres I know of are the Hall brand; the most common cause of fibres breaking down is a badly adjusted sound-box or a weak diaphragm.—F. W. S., Blackburn.

(375) **A Correction.**—Mr. Balmain's article on "Blast" appeared in the issue for January, 1925, not as stated on page 334.—P. W., Putney.

(376) **To Increase Resonance.**—Balancing the gramophone on glass jars certainly does what H. H. E. claims. But unless care is taken the method is dangerous. Too much play will inevitably lead to increased record wear and may cause the tone-arm to swing across the record and plough it up. I advise readers who try this experiment to test the effect with a fibre needle. If the point breaks down quickly, there is a danger signal that all is not well.—P. W., Putney.



WORDS WANTED BY READERS

These queries are inserted with the idea that readers will help one another. Town readers, please note that the local library may often afford the information they seek. Readers in general, please note that the singing English versions of most popular operas can be cheaply purchased through a music dealer or from Ricordi's, Chappell's, etc.

- (1) English words of "Absent, yet present," "Speak, music," and Hackett's version of Schubert's "Serenade"; Russian words of Rimsky-Korsakoff's "The Prophet."—E. G. Lamble, 51, Balmoral Road, London, N.W. 2.
- (2) Italian (or Neapolitan) and English words of "Santa Lucia," "Core 'ngrato," "La fatal pietra," "O terra, addio," "Niun me tema."—H. M. Severn, 14, Walpole Road, Twickenham.
- (3) Italian words and translations of "Credo," "Era la notte," and "Sì, pel ciel" from "Otello," "Te Deum" from "Tosca." "Piff, paff" and "Troncar suo di quell' empio"; Latin and English of "Pro peccatis"; English of "Song of the wooden-legged fiddler," "The solitary one," and "The Seminarist" (last two by Norman Allin).—Phil Marchant, c/o P.O. Box 307, Invercargill, New Zealand.
- (4) English of "Lily of Laguna," "I may be crazy," "Phyllis has such charming graces," "The gentle maiden," "Linden Lea," "O men from the fields," "The blind ploughman," "Had a horse," "Shepherd, see thy horse's foaming mane," "Langley Fair," "Jock the fiddler," "Your tiny hand is frozen," and "The Prize Song" (as sung by John Perry).—H. Peers, "Oakes," Stretton Avenue, Didsbury.

National Gramophonic Society Notes

(All communications should be addressed to The Secretary, N.G.S., 58, Frith Street, London, W.1)

A new leaflet about the Society has been prepared, setting forth its objects, development and the conditions of membership. Copies will be supplied to any member who can usefully distribute them. The six 12in. records of the Schubert *Quintet*, about which Mr.

W. W. Cobbett, F.R.C.M., has kindly written the following note for us, will be distributed during the month, together with the long-promised 12-in. and 10-in. records of short works by Orlando Gibbons, Eugene Goossens, and Ernest Tomlinson.

Schubert's String Quintet in C major

THIS Quintet was Schubert's Swan Song. Written in September, 1828, he died two months after its completion, at the age of thirty-one years and nine months. It is scored for string quartet with a second 'cello added, a combination which connotes such wondrous possibilities of tone colour that it is little less than remarkable that so few composers have adopted it. There exist a thousand string quartets, but scarcely a dozen of these quintets, unless one includes a long series of works by Boccherini and Onslow, in which the second 'cello does little more than take the place of a double bass. The Russians, Glazounov, Taniev, Zolotarev, Malichewsky, and the Austrian, Goldmark, have written quintets of some musical interest, but in all of these the weight of tone of the bass instruments is occasionally felt to the disadvantage of the music.

This is not the case in Schubert's work, in which a perfect balance of tone is preserved, and which is one of the masterpieces of chamber music. It has not the epic quality of Beethoven, the humour of Haydn, nor the perfection of structure of Mozart, but in its melodic charm and especially in the inevitability of its modulations, it has not, in my opinion, been equalled by any composer before or since, whilst of its purely human appeal I can give a very convincing instance. I have known four musicians, all greatly experienced in this class of music, and none in the least inclined by disposition to sentimentality, who have with strange unanimity expressed the feeling that, were they fated in their last hours to listen to some lovely strain, this would be the music of their election.

One of these, John Saunders, an accomplished quartet leader in his time, is no longer with us. Upon his tomb in Norwood Cemetery are inscribed a few bars of this quintet, probably by his own wish.



*So long as men can breathe, or eyes can see,
So long lives this, and this gives life to thee.*

Shakespeare Sonnet XVIII

From the tombstone of "John Saunders, artist and musician, 1863-1919," in Norwood Cemetery.

I have said enough to show to subscribers what is the character of the work now recorded. We, who have essayed to interpret it, are fully conscious of the imperfections of the rendering, but are able to say, in all sincerity, that we have felt deeply every note played and so may succeed in winning some sympathy from listeners. From the comments made by those who have heard the test records I am glad to quote one. Miss Geisler-Schubert, a grand-niece of the composer, expressed her delight that the N.G.S. should in this way bring knowledge of her kinsman's music to so many music lovers, in private circles, who are unable to hear the "real thing." Among the listeners to the test records who have spoken of them in sympathetic terms are Spencer Dyke, the Lener Quartet, Ethel Hobday, Edwin Evans and a few others, but it is the Society's wider audience which really counts and—*nous verrons*. I take this opportunity of cordially thanking those subscribers (about eighty) who wrote me last year appreciative letters anent the Raff-Rubinstein records.

The following informal words on the subject of the quintet may help subscribers to follow the music. Part 1, *Allegro*, commences tranquilly but there is already a thrill in the air at the third bar, whilst the passage which commences the twenty-sixth bar is full of suppressed excitement, working up to a piece of bold imitational writing, interrupted by a *piano subito* leading to a theme of indescribable beauty played by the two 'celli. The same fascinating theme is assigned to the two violins in turn,

with alternate figures of accompaniment which should not escape attention, for this is idealistic string writing of a strangely beautiful kind.

Part 2 has many strenuous moments, the triplets and syncopations in the inner parts being difficult to render with clarity upon the gramophone. In Parts 3 and 4 the movement develops at considerable length, No. 4 containing only the last bars, which have a typically Schubertian ring. On the same record (Part 4) the *E major Adagio* steals upon the listener like perfume on a night wind. The *pizzicato* notes of the violin will be noticed, with a slight response from the second 'cello.

In Part 5 there is storm and stress and (*more* Beethoven) some eloquent pauses, a startling enharmonic change, and then an episode (Part 6) in which the second 'cello has running passages which only an artist of great experience can accomplish adequately. They are the *bête noire* of the amateur 'cellist, and require much anxious rehearsal.

Part 7 contains the last bars of the slow movement, followed by the *Scherzo*, a movement of extreme virility, known to the French (so Sarasate, who resided in Paris, told me) as *La Chasse*. And with good reason. One hears the winding of the horns, the tramp of horsemen, pulling up and starting again in eager pursuit of the quarry, and finally a sharp pistol shot, the *coup de grace* given to the hunted animal.

Part 8, the *Trio (Andante sostenuto)* in *D flat major*, demands very serious attention from the listener. It differs from any "trio" that ever was written, and is in strong contrast with those to be found in Schubert's other instrumental works. No lovely variant of the *Scherzo*, no cheerful *Ländler* is here but a presentment of the soul state of a moribund artist seeking to

conquer his unhappiness by his sense of beauty. The combination of instruments suggests some effective grouping in twos and threes, the opening phrase, for instance, being assigned to the violin and second 'cello in unison, followed by a *tutti* of rich chords and exquisite modulations. These modulations are incessant, a feature in Schubert's compositions which has been often commented upon, and, in the case of the *D minor Quartet*, disapproved by Mendelssohn! They are, like everything Schubert wrote, natural and spontaneous, the work of a composer of commanding genius. The last bars are included in Part 9 and followed by a bridge passage in unison leading to the *Scherzo (da capo)*.

Parts 10, 11, and 12 are records of the *Finale (Allegretto)* which is throughout joyous in character though commencing in the minor (C). It is generally spoken of as being in a strain congenial to Viennese audiences, but who does not revel in dance rhythms of the nobler kind? There is little to point out in music so obviously graceful except the filigree work assigned to the violins who have some tricky triplets to play, and some rather precarious dovetailing of little *spiccato* passages just before the close of Part 11. By the way, listeners without a score are warned of the general pause three bars from the end of Part 11, as the record is liable to be removed too soon. Halfway through Part 12 there is an acceleration of pace, and the work comes to a triumphal conclusion with an energetic *stretto*.

W. W. COBBETT.

Gramophone Societies' Reports

[Owing to the increasing number of societies, it is unfortunately necessary to ration reporting secretaries down to 200 words a month. Reports must reach the London Office before the fifteenth of the month for inclusion in the next number. Items from programmes must be incorporated in the report; programmes separately attached cannot be printed.]

ACCRINGTON AND DISTRICT GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.—The November recitals of the above society passed off successfully in every way. The first was a "Dealer's night," when the three leading dealers in Greater Accrington kindly lent records from the November lists, thus providing the audience with a programme of all new recordings. The H.M.V. records demonstrated were as follows: *Martial Moments*, band of H.M. Coldstream Guards; *La Farfalletta* and *La Girometta*, sung by Tito Schipa; *Sigh no more, ladies*, George Baker; *Piccaninny Lullaby*, by the Gresham Singers; *From mighty kings*, Florence Austral; *Près des remparts de Seville*, Jeanne Gordon; and *Petite Suite de Concert*, by De Groot and the Piccadilly Orchestra. The Columbia records enjoyed were Dora Labbette's rendering of *Come unto these yellow sands*; the cello solo *Chant sans paroles*, by George Roth; *Not Old*, by Bransby Williams; Frank Ferera's steel guitar novelty, *Isle of Oahm*; *The Face*, by George Robey; and the Cherniavsky Trio (instrumental), *Valse Triste*. The Vocalion records given included Malcolm McEachern's rendering of *Sperate 'o figli*; *Ah, mon fils*, by Phyllis Archibald; and *Come into the garden, Maud*, by John Coates. Our secretary, Mr. Barnes, was in the chair during the first part of the programme, and our president, Mr. Mason, took his place during the second half, whilst Mr. Walden, a keen worker for the Society, was demonstrator.

The second meeting was to enjoy a joint recital by two of our members—Mr. Curtis, of Oswaldtwistle, and Mr. West, of Church. A very large and appreciative audience assembled, and with Mr. Mason presiding a very happy evening was spent. Mr. Curtis, a Gilbert and Sullivan enthusiast, gave tit-bits from the operas *H.M.S. Pinafore*, *Mikado*, *Iolanthe*, *Princess Ida*, *The Gondoliers*, *Yeomen of the Guard*, and *The Pirates of Penzance*, all H.M.V. records. Mr. West gave miscellaneous items, including the H.M.V. records (by the Light Opera Co.) of *No, No, Nanette* and *Rose Marie*; *The Adjutant*, by Harry Dearth; the anthem, *O gladsome light*, by the chorus of the British National Opera Co.; *A Fragment*, by the Savoy Orpheans; *The Trumpeter*, by John McCormack; and *Three Fishers*, by Madame Kirkby Lunn, all H.M.V. records. His Columbia selection included Gervase Elwes' rendering of Dvorák's *Songs my Mother taught me* and Quilter's *O Mistress Mine* and *Fair house of joy*; also Grieg's *Solveig's Song*, sung by Dora Labbette.—L. MOORE.

(Held over from last month.)

AGRICOLA GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.—The first meeting of the society, held on December 15th, was a marked success. The announcement that Mr. Compton Mackenzie had agreed to become a patron of the society was received with much appreciation. The first portion of the programme was provided by Mr. E. F. Flanders. Then followed "Forty-five Minutes with Mozart," arranged by the Committee, during which Mr. H. G. Huckel, our vice-chairman, introduced each item with a brief comment on the work being performed. The meeting closed with selections from the mid-November and December records of the Columbia, H.M.V., and Vocalion companies.

Mr. H. E. Netherclift was responsible for the first portion of the programme at the society's second meeting, held on January 12th. Confining himself solely to Columbia records, Mr. Netherclift presented a varied and interesting selection, which met with general appreciation, and of which Stracciari's *Prologue to Pagliacci* (Leoncavallo), W. H. Squire's cello solo, *Humoreske* (*Chanson à Boire*) (Dunkler), and *Carmen Selection* (Bizet), played by the New Queen's Hall Light Orchestra, may be cited as examples. After a general discussion on programme construction the meeting closed with a selection from the January records, of which the following received full measure of applause:—Columbia: *Church bells of Novgorod*, Kedroff Quartette, and *Voices of Spring* (J. Strauss), the Geiger Viennese Dance Orchestra. H.M.V.: *Sonata in A* (Boccherini), Suggia. Vocalion: *One of the Guards* (H. Fisher), a rollicking song admirably sung by Malcolm McEachern, and *Morning Song* (Easthope Martin), played by Phyllis Allan. Next

meeting February 9th, members' night.—EDWARD U. BROCKWAY, Hon. Secretary.

BLACKPOOL GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.—The meeting of November 25th, held at our headquarters, Florence Café, Topping Street, was a demonstration of records by two of our lady members, Miss Bell and Mrs. Pilling. A very hearty vote of thanks was given to the ladies for their kindness in providing an excellent programme.

The programme for December 9th was a change from the general routine, being *The Gondoliers*, on eleven H.M.V. double-sided records, provided by yet another lady member, Mrs. Leather. At the conclusion of the second act, judging by the reception that was given to Mrs. Leather, I think it would be quite safe to feature this class of programme at intervals. The remaining portion of the evening was taken up, by the kindness of the Vocalion Co., with a few numbers from their December supplement, which were highly received by the members present. The *Ballet Suite*, *Old King Cole*, by Dr. Vaughan Williams, are two very good records, and the recording of the work is very fine, as is the execution of the Aeolian Orchestra. Other items were *Voici Noël* and *Knight of Bethlehem*, sung by John Coates; *The Land o' the Leal* and *The Devil's awa' wi' the Exciseman*, sung by Roy Henderson; *Cries of London*, by Nancy Royle (soprano) and Michael Head (baritone); Chopin's *Ballade in A flat*, by York Bowen (pianoforte); and another record of that brilliant lady violinist, Jelly d'Aranyi, *Largo* and *Allegro gracioso* and *Passepied*.—WM. GRAINGER, Recording Secretary.

THE BLACKPOOL RECORDED MUSIC SOCIETY.—On December 15th we had an extremely successful "open meeting" at Feldman's Arcade Café, the occasion being a gramophone concert composed exclusively of Columbia records on two Columbia Grafonolas. Messrs. Sharples spared no expense to make the occasion worthy of remembrance. Over three hundred very tastefully printed programmes were distributed and actually the demand far exceeded the supply. The items given during the evening were very carefully arranged and admirably balanced. As we obtained another six members at this meeting, we of the committee felt our hearts glowing still warmer in the goodly cause. Principal items in the programme were: *One fine day* from *Madama Butterfly*, by Miriam Licette, which has a beautiful orchestral accompaniment; Porpora's *Aria*, played, or rather I could almost say, sung, by Lionel Tertis, the master exponent of the viola as a solo instrument; *Nocturne in E flat* (Chopin) by Pablo Casals, the renowned cellist; *Danny Boy*, by Dora Labbette; *O lovely night*, by Stralia; the *Gypsy Rondo*, from the *Finale of the Trio No. 1*, by Haydn; played by Catterall, Squire, and Murdoch. And, of course, we mustn't forget those unique entertainers, Milton Hayes and Vivian Foster, who were excellent leavening of an admirable programme.

On Monday, January 11th, we had the *Mikado*, complete set, on H.M.V., the records being loaned by Messrs. A. and E. Cook and the H.M.V. gramophone by Messrs. Sharples. I have no need to comment on the records themselves or on the opera. Our indefatigable secretary, Mr. Burrows, went to the trouble of writing an account of the opera, and explained in detail the whole story from Overture to Finale. In fact it was really *The Mikado* given by Mr. Burrows and a few records, and there was no doubt at all that it was a decided improvement on a bare demonstration of records.—V. P. BARRAUD THOMAS, Hon. Recording Secretary.

BRIXTON GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.—The hon. secretary, Mr. J. T. Fisher, 28A, Fieldhouse Road, S.W. 12, has sent us a booklet containing particulars of the society and the arrangements for the season. On February 2nd Mr. R. Brayne will provide a "concert of general interest" and there will be a "Musical Address on Operatic Music," followed by a technical talk on reproducing points.

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.—We concluded a most successful term on Monday, December 7th, with a concert which included the *Good-humoured Ladies*, the Brahms *Variations*, played by Backhaus, and *Petrouchka*, which was a brilliant success, and members evinced great enthusiasm for this work, many of them bringing scores. Other large works which have been performed at our weekly concerts have been the *First Rasoumovsky Quartet*, the *Quartet, Op. 18, No. 2* (Beethoven), the *Ravel Septette*, Strauss' *Don Juan*, the Mendelssohn *G minor Piano Concerto*, the Mozart *D major Violin Concerto*, Ravel's *Mother*

Goose Suite, the Beethoven *Fourth Piano Concerto*, the César Franck *Violin Sonata*, the Debussy *String Quartet*, Haydn's *Oxford Symphony*, and the *Grail Scene* from *Parsifal* on the new records. The concerts have been well attended, on the whole, our largest attendance being sixty-two for the Debussy *Quartet* concert. It is hoped to enlarge the membership still more next term and an attempt will be made to give more publicity to the society, an attempt which has hitherto been impossible through lack of funds. The concerts are now held in the Masonic Hall, and the first concert of this term was on Monday, Jan. 18th.—L. B. NEEL, *Hon. Secretary*, Caius College.

(Held over from last month.)

CARDIFF AND DISTRICT GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.—The subject down for December 17th was "Outstanding Records of 1925." To the committee was relegated the task of choosing the programme, and from the wealth of discs available they finally made a selection which evidently gave general satisfaction. Space—or rather, lack of it—forbids individual comment.

On January 7th a lecture, "The History of the Song," was given by our secretary, Mr. Evan G. Jones. In the brief hour and a half or so at his disposal he gave a brief résumé of the development of the song in different countries, confining himself to the pure "Lied" or art-song, thus excluding the oratorio or operatic aria. The illustrations which he had chosen were indeed excellent, and from a long list of fine records I would mention these:—Thomas Morley's *It was a lover and his lass* (John Coates); *Three Elizabethan Love-songs* (Dora Labbette); Schubert's *Linden Tree* (Schorr) and *The Post* (Ivögün); Schumann's *Two Grenadiers* (Chaliapin); Brahms' *May Night* (McCormack); *Vain Serenade* (Gerhardt) and *The Nightingale* (McCormack); Wolf's *Wo find ich Trost* (McCormack); Strauss' *Cécilie* (Gerhardt); Quilter's *Now sleeps the crimson petal* and *Love's Philosophy* (Gervase Elwes). We acknowledge the kindness of Messrs. Dale Forty in lending the Columbia Grafonola and records.—TREVOR PRICE, *Hon. Recording Secretary*.

DEWSBURY AND DISTRICT GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.—This society has had two very successful meetings during the past month. The first meeting on December 8th was entertained by the *Dewsbury District News*, the gramophone expert of this paper being very interested in the society. The programme was a splendid one and fully maintained the standard of previous successes.

The last meeting on December 15th was of a novel kind. It was called Members' Suggestion Night, and the first part of the evening was devoted to the general discussion of any ideas that could be presented by members for the benefit of the society. Many good ideas were brought forward, notably by Mr. Brosher, one of the founders of the society and who is always ready with ideas for the benefit of the society. The later part of the evening was happily spent in listening to a series of recitals of a quarter of an hour each (elastic ones), by Messrs. Brosher, Pritchard, and Thomas; this part of the programme was a great success and it is to be hoped that it will be repeated later in the session.

The meeting of December 29th was postponed owing to the proximity of the holidays.—J. H. BROWN, *Recording Secretary* (pro tem.).

THE DUBLIN GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.—On Thursday, December 10th the Dublin Gramophone Society had the very great pleasure of hearing a lecture-demonstration by the president of the society, Dr. J. F. Larchet. One of the best known musicians in Ireland, Dr. Larchet is doing invaluable educational work in music and is not unknown as a composer; many gramophone enthusiasts know his song, *Padraic the Fiddler*, which was recorded by McCormack and Kreisler and issued by H.M.V. in January, 1925. Dr. Larchet's lecture was entitled "How to listen to Music," and was designed to show how easy it is for the average person with the help of ordinary intelligent effort to gain a true appreciation of the masterpieces of classical music—in short, to become a real and genuine listener. The admirable and straightforward way in which the lecturer explained his points made it easy for the dullest person to grasp his meanings, and his lucid exposition of form in music was a revelation to many. Dr. Larchet "illustrated" his address with the H.M.V. records of Mozart's *Jupiter Symphony* and Beethoven's *Fifth Symphony* and some others.—NOEL C. WEBB, *Hon. Reporting Secretary*.

THE EALING RECORDED MUSIC SOCIETY.—The December meeting of the above society was held in Mr. Bensted's audition room on December 4th. The first half of the programme was devoted to members, each member being asked to bring a favourite record. A nice programme was thus provided, the following being

a few of the selected items:—H.M.V., D.K.114: *Si pel ciel marmoreo giuro* (Otello), Caruso and Ruffo. H.M.V., D.B.573: *Fiddle and I*, Alma Gluck and Zimbalist (violinist). Vocalion X.9652: *A Celtic Lament*, Howard Bliss ('cello). H.M.V., C.1028: *Chilperic* by the Coldstream Guards Band. During the interval a few recent issues, kindly sent by the Vocalion Co., were played through; K.05203, *Largo* and *Allegro giocoso*, played by Jelly d'Aranyi (violin) being much appreciated; this is a fine recording, quite up to Celebrity standard, good value for 4s. 6d. Other good records were K.05204, *Veronique Selection*, played by H.M. Life Guards, and X.9665, *The Land o' the Leal*, sung by Roy Henderson. By the way, the scratch on the Vocalion records is very slight. A Lifebelt was on the table for inspection, but to the disappointment of all it could not be used as there was some difficulty in fixing it. The second half of the programme was spent in playing new issues:—H.M.V., D.B.780-1: *Quintet in E flat major*, Op. 44 (Schumann), Ossip Gabrilowitsch (pianoforte), with Flonzaley Quartet. H.M.V., D.B.799: *Nor sleep nor rest for my tortured spirit* (aria) also *How goes it, Prince?* (*Prince Igor*), sung by Th. I. Chaliapine (bass). Parlophone F.10388: *Who is Sylvia?* Op. 106, No. 4 (Schubert), sung by Emmy Heckmann-Bettendorf (soprano) with piano accompaniment. Columbia 3801: *The meanderings of Monty*, parts 10-11, *Monty on Bananas* and *Monty meanders through the ads*. This record caused roars of laughter. This concluded the meeting. For the January meeting our president, Mr. Bensted, has promised to give another talk on the various musical instruments.—REG. PAINE, *Recording Secretary*.

(Held over from last month.)

At the January meeting, held on Thursday, January 7th, the first half of the programme was provided by our president, Mr. Bensted, in a lecture on various musical instruments. Each instrument was taken separately and a few words spoken on their respective tonal qualities and use in the orchestra. A few bars were then played on the piano during which Mr. Bensted pointed out where the various instruments came in, etc. A few records were then run through and with the president's help we were able to follow the different instruments through the record. On behalf of the members the chairman, Mr. Ross, most heartily thanked Mr. Bensted. After the interval a few new issues were played.—REG. PAINE, *Recording Secretary*.

EAST LONDON GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.—The ninety-third monthly meeting of the above society, held at headquarters, 15, Broadway, Stratford, was largely attended, the attraction no doubt being partly due to the demonstration of the E.M.G. table grand model. Previous to the demonstration of this machine a number of records were played from the November lists. For the lover of orchestral music the Parlophone Company have issued good complete recordings of Mozart's *Symphony in G minor* and *Till's Merry Pranks*, by R. Strauss. Their new soprano, Fritz Joki, has given us the *Aria of the Queen of the Night* from Mozart's *Magic Flute*. It is to be hoped that this soprano has come to stay, for she has a wonderful voice. Marek Weber and his orchestra turn their attention to the modern vogue in dancing and *En Panuelito* and *La Monteria* tangos will be welcomed by those who enjoy this new dance. The Vocalion Co. have also turned their attention to Mozart this month, and a very fine rendition of his *Concerto No. 3 in G* is accomplished by that excellent violinist Jelly d'Aranyi and the Aeolian Orchestra. John Coates sings *Come into the garden, Maud*, in truly John Coates style, which should be a sufficient recommendation for this fine record. Malcolm McEachern, M. Murray-Davey, and Phyllis Archibald also provide a feast of good singing.

The H.M.V. records played were mostly criticised by the members from the point of view as to whether their new process of recording was as good as the old style, and it was generally felt that records done by the new process lacked personality, appeared to sound mechanical, and the voices or instruments seemed to be in the tone-arm instead of coming out of the horn of the machine. Probably these faults, if they do actually exist, are rectified by the new H.M.V. machine.

Of the E.M.G. machine much could be said, but sufficient are the plaudits thereof when it was unanimously agreed by the members that, as in the case of the E.M.G. pedestal model, so in the case of the table grand, Mr. Ginn has scored another triumph, and is undoubtedly presenting to the public one of the best, if not the very best machine for true tone of vocalists or instrumentalists. Particulars of the society will be forwarded on application to the honorary secretary, 209, Masterman Road, East Ham, E. 6.—W. J. WORLEY.

(Held over from last month.)

On Dec. 12th, Mr. Cunningham, a member of the society, kindly brought along his Vocarola and entertained the members with a programme of good music which clearly demonstrated the excellent qualities of his machine. The new portable H.M.V. model was also demonstrated, and although not made for the purpose of playing in a large hall had a surprising volume and is really possessed of good tonal values. The new "K.G.C." machine was demonstrated at the meeting of the society on Saturday, January 16th, 1926. Full particulars of the society will be sent on application to the hon. secretary, 209, Masterman Road, East Ham, E. 6

THE GLASGOW AND DISTRICT GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.—Our first December meeting, held on Monday, 7th, was devoted to operatic music, including grand opera and some extracts from light opera. President Jas. C. Stewart presided, and the programme was carried out by Messrs. Ewing and McIntosh, Ltd., to whom we were also indebted for the use of two excellent cabinet models of the new H.M.V. gramophone. The programme, which was prepared by Messrs. Ewing and McIntosh, assisted by Mr. W. C. Weir, our musical adviser, was an excellent one. The programme opened with the *Introduction* (Act 3, *Lohengrin*), played by the Symphony Orchestra (H.M.V., D.937), and was followed by, amongst other fine excerpts, *The Mad Scene* (*Lucia di Lammermoor*), L. Paikin (soprano) (Voc. A 0241); *Celeste Aida* (*Aida*), Martinelli (tenor) (H.M.V., D.B.335); *Entry of the Gods* (*Rheingold*), Albert Hall Orchestra (H.M.V., D.503); *See the way, you rogues* (*Il Seraglio*), Norman Allin (bass) (Col. D.1525); *Morris Dance and Gavotte* (Tom Jones), Symphony Orchestra (D.188). The second half of the programme comprised excerpts from light opera, and included items from *Pinafore*, *Yeomen of the Guard*, *The Beggar's Opera*, *The Lily of Killarney*, *The Mikado*, and *Ruddigore*. We are greatly indebted to the Vocalion and Parlophone Companies for sending us fine examples of their products, which will be reproduced at our meetings.—T. MACFARLANE, *Hon. Secretary*.

HALIFAX AND DISTRICT RECORDED MUSIC SOCIETY.—A society with this title was formed in Halifax, Yorkshire, on December 16th, 1925, and business commenced then was completed at a second meeting on January 12th, 1926. Officers elected were: Chairman of committee, Mr. W. A. Chislett; hon. secretary, Mr. J. S. Waring; hon. treasurer, Mr. A. E. Gledhill; auditor, Mr. E. Schofield; committee, Miss E. A. Stafford, Messrs. W. Ratcliffe, T. Marchetti, J. W. Alderson, J. P. Martin, and L. H. Jackson. It was arranged that meetings be held on the second and fourth Tuesdays monthly from October to March inclusive, the question of holding monthly meetings only in the summer months or otherwise being held over for the present. A subscription of 5s. per member was fixed, but additional members from the same household to be admitted at 2s. 6d. each. After business had been completed on the second date mentioned above Mr. W. A. Chislett gave a recital of what he appropriately called a "mixed grill" of recorded music. The idea that lay behind his selection was that it would suggest subjects on which could be built programmes for future occasions. The recital was a good send-off. The society commences with over 80 members.—J. SANDHAM WARING, *Hon. Secretary*, "Avenham," 15, Willowfield Road, Halifax.

HUDDERSFIELD GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.—The above society, although only just over a month old, is forging rapidly ahead. The second fortnightly meeting was held on Thursday evening, November 19th, at the Y.M.C.A., John William Street, Huddersfield. The programme was in the hands of Mr. T. H. Dyson, one of the members of the society, and the machine was a Columbia Grafonola. The following are a few of the records worthy of special mention: *Divinités du Styx* (*Alceste*) (Gluck), Maria Jeritz (H.M.V.); *Capriccio Valse* (Wieniawsky), Bronislaw Huberman (violin) (Bruno.); *The Pretty Creature* (Storace), John Coates (Vocalion); *Variations on a Theme, Op. 35* (Paganini-Brahms), Wilhelm Backhaus (pianist) (H.M.V.); *Chi mi frena* (*Lucia di Lammermoor*) (Donizetti), Sextet in Italian (H.M.V.); *Martial Moments* (arr. Aubrey Winter), Band of H.M. Coldstream Guards (H.M.V.).

On Thursday evening, December 3rd, the first public recital was given for the society by Messrs. Joshua Marshall and Co., Ltd., New Street, Huddersfield, at the Northumberland Street Schools, Huddersfield, Mr. S. H. Crowther in the chair. An excellent programme of H.M.V. records was given on the largest new H.M.V. cabinet model, demonstrated by Mr. H. Rowntree, of Bradford. We also had the pleasure of a visit from Mr. M. H. Watson, president of the Bradford and District Gramophone and Phonograph Society, who gave us some valuable information which is very much

appreciated. The following are a few of the records worthy of special mention: *Lustspiel Overture*, Coldstream Guards (H.M.V., C.1199); *Scherzo Taranella*, Jascha Heifetz (H.M.V., D.B.290); *Celeste Aida*, Giovanni Martinelli (H.M.V., D.B.335); *Son vergin vezzosa* (*Polonaise, I Puritani*), Amelita Galli-Curci (H.M.V., D.B.641); *Malaguena*, New Light Symphony Orchestra (H.M.V., C.1210). After a very hearty vote of thanks to Mr. H. Rowntree, and some remarks by our chairman, the meeting came to an enthusiastic conclusion.—H. A. SHAW, *Hon. Secretary*.

(Held over from last month.)

CITY OF LEEDS GRAMOPHONE AND PHONOGRAPH SOCIETY.—On Tuesday, December 15th, at the Y.M.C.A., Albion Place, Leeds, a programme of light music was provided by Mr. V. Wilkinson, after which several selections from the operas of *The Ring* were demonstrated by Mr. Mayo. The audience were charmed with the spectacular display of instrumental and vocal renderings. The latest model of H.M.V. machine was used which showed to great advantage. Messrs. Archibald Ramsden, Ltd., of Park Row, Leeds, kindly lent the gramophone and our thanks are due to them for this and other occasions when they have assisted the society. The ladies are to arrange a social in February, and inter-home visits are being instituted. We are a happy family at Leeds and not so orthodox as is the general rule.—H. S.

THE LEICESTER GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.—There was a good attendance at our meeting held on November 16th, to meet Mr. R. A. Hearne, a representative of the Parlophone Company. Mr. Hearne brought with him a splendid selection of records, and his demonstration proved that it will repay all "record buyers" to keep in touch with the Parlophone lists. Outstanding items of the programme were the following recordings:—10362: *Song of the Page, O here mid blooming flowers* from *The Huguenots* (F. Jokl, soprano). 10182: *Am I enthralled in wonderful dreams and Could you divine the fate from The Flying Dutchman* (duets, Bettendorf and Engel). 10079: *Credo* (*Othello*) and *Il balen* (*Il Trovatore*) (G. Baker). 10204: *Abide with me* (Jessie Broughton, contralto). It was a very enjoyable programme, and a hearty vote of thanks was accorded Mr. Hearne, on the proposition of Mr. H. H. Dennis, who in the course of his remarks mentioned the Jokl record (10362) as being the best of the evening: an observation with which the majority present agreed. It is a delightful number.—W. H. ABELL, *Hon. Secretary*.

(Held over from last month.)

All records for attendance were broken when Mr. Moses Baritz paid us a visit on December 14th. The lecturer had for his subject the opera *Carmen*, and gave us a very entertaining and instructive talk, dealing with the opera in a very exhaustive manner. Giving many interesting facts about the composer, Georges Bizet, and the first production of the opera, Mr. Baritz brought before us many points which are frequently overlooked even by those who profess to be thoroughly conversant with the music. He particularly emphasised the beauty of the scoring for the wood-wind throughout, and certainly the records used for demonstration proved this point beyond all doubt.

Our second annual dance resulted in a profit of £6, and I can recommend this means of raising money to any society whose funds cause the treasurer anxiety. We are getting many splendid records from the Vocalion and Parlophone companies, and the library has so far been a great acquisition and much appreciated by the members.

In accordance with the Christmas spirit, our meeting held on December 28th was devoted to a programme composed entirely of humorous records. There was a splendid attendance considering the wretched weather, and the usual attractions at this season of the year. The programme opened with a series of Regal records of *The Parson and the Squire*, which gave us an excellent start. Other items much appreciated were recordings by Will Evans, George Robey on "The Face," Ernest Hastings, Tom Clare, Clarkson Rose, and the late Alfred Lester. A novel feature was introduced by making a guessing competition of a record of melodious memories. The winner succeeded in naming 18 out of the 25 tunes played and was presented with a record generously given by Mr. Francis Benskin.—W. H. ABELL, *Hon. Secretary*.

LIVERPOOL AND DISTRICT GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.—During the past few years Vocalion nights have been regular and popular features of the syllabus, but special interest attached to the "All Vocalion" programme given on Monday, December 14th, 1925, as the major portion of the records selected were drawn from the presentation copies which, by reason of the generosity of the

Vocalion Company, are sent to the Liverpool Society in common with other societies, month by month. The items in the programme under review were all first class. That which called forth most comment was the *Concerto No. 3 in G, for Violin and Orchestra* (Mozart). This sparkling and tuneful work is most delightfully played by Miss d'Aranyi and the Aeolian Orchestra, with a nice balance being observed between the band and the soloist. The violinist displays astonishing finesse and technique and sympathetic insight and interpretation are not wanting. The consummate art of John Coates was shown in a little song, *The Knight of Bethlehem*, with arresting phrasing and a clarity of diction which might well serve as a classic example. Mons. Murray-Davey, with a beautiful and cultured bass voice, sings *Was duftet doch (Meistersinger)* with great effect and the pianoforte solos of Sapellnikoff and the *Il dolce suono* of Luella Paikin were much praised.

At a meeting held on Monday, December 28th, the arrangements were in charge of Mr. C. G. F. Johnstone, who staged an interesting competition for which he kindly offered a prize, and who also presented a collection of quite seasonable records. The "Christ-massy" tone of the affair lent a charming air to the proceedings.—J. W. HARWOOD, *Recording Secretary*.

MANCHESTER GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.—The December meeting was held on Monday the 14th, when Mr. A. Webb gave an extremely enjoyable demonstration, accompanied by interesting and illuminating notes, of Victor records, the great interest of which was enhanced by their reproduction on two of the latest H.M.V. instruments (one a portable model), and also a corresponding model of the recent type, all kindly lent by Mr. W. E. Archer, C.P.A. Buildings, 85, Oxford Street, to whom the thanks of the society were cordially expressed. Direct and comparative tests were thus possible, and the audience, always an ultra-critical one, appeared instantaneously convinced of the general superiority in detail and in power and warmth of tone of the new instruments and the volume of even the little "portable" was a definite surprise to all. All the orchestral records were remarkably fine, especially in all-round quality and balance of tone; in this fully equalling, if not surpassing, the best English recordings. The best were *The Ride of the Valkyries* and the *Magic Fire Music*, both by the Philadelphia Symphony Orchestra. A superb H.M.V. record of Part 2 of the *Grail Scene* in *Parsifal* was also given, which compared most favourably with the Victors. Of the vocal items the best were a most lovely duet, Rubinstein's *Wanderer's Night Song*, by Alda and Schumann-Heineck, a superbly clear-toned bass record by Plançon of *Nonnes qui reposez (Robert le Diable)*, Braga's *Angels' Serenade*, sung by Alda, with a beautiful obbligato by Elman—quite the best soprano rendering of this well-known air, and *One Sweetly Solemn Thought*, by Schumann-Heineck, whose voice here and in the duet with Alda was exquisite and as fresh as if recorded yesterday, a striking contrast to the antiquated H.M.V. recordings of her. A daintily played piano record by Frank La Forge of Chopin's *Berceuse* showed, with a fibre needle, a delightfully velvety tone on the new instrument, but this, though most pleasing in itself, rather roused a suspicion that we were not getting a true piano tone. On the other hand, a new recording by Pachmann of Chopin's lovely *Nocturne in D flat major* showed, in conjunction with the new instrument, an almost perfect tone. Amongst other direct tests between the three instruments was the *Soldiers' Chorus* from *Faust*, by the Apollo Male Chorus, which proved conclusively the incontestable superiority of the new Model No. 511 in almost every respect. At the conclusion a hearty vote of thanks was unanimously given to Mr. Webb for his most enjoyable demonstration of records seldom heard in this country and also to Mr. F. W. Hambleton, to whose highly expert manipulation of the instruments very much of the success of the evening was due.—CECIL J. BRENNAN, *Hon. Treasurer and Secretary*.

THE NELSON AND DISTRICT GRAMOPHONE MUSIC SOCIETY.—At the meeting of the above society held on Tuesday, November 10th, the speaker was Mr. Walter Hargreaves, of Burnley, who gave a very interesting lecture entitled "Tips for Gramophone Users," in which he showed how to get the best from a gramophone. The instrument used was a Columbia, and after testing speed and level the lecturer proceeded to make exhaustive experiments with different needles—steel (both loud and medium), fibre, and semi-permanent. These tests were carried out on very diverse classes of records, to show that what brings the best out of one instrument may not suit a voice on another instrument.

The next two meetings were occupied by a demonstration by Mr. T. Croasdale, of the new H.M.V. gramophone. Only one

recital had originally been contemplated, but the meeting-room proved too small for all who came to hear, so for the sake of those turned away disappointed, a new programme was prepared for the following fortnight. The second evening provided a welcome opportunity of checking and confirming first impressions. The general feeling was one of delighted amazement. The new gramophone undoubtedly marks a great advance in recorded music, its effect on the bass—both vocal and instrumental—on the percussion instruments, and on pianoforte records being particularly good. In some of the records much of the amazing effect was certainly due to the new process of recording, but the rendering of some "old process" records showed how pleasing these could be. Mr. Croasdale had on both occasions chosen programmes as varied as possible. His records—all H.M.V.—included part of *The Twilight of the Gods*, the new *Soldiers' Chorus* from *Faust*, Schumann's *Quintet in E flat major*, a saxophone solo, and the B.N.O.C. choir, besides, of course, soprano, mezzo-soprano, contralto, tenor, baritone and bass solos, music by violin, violoncello, and pianoforte, and by small orchestras, and two or three humorous "spoken" records. The society's lending library now contains over 60 records, and thanks are tendered to those members who have contributed records, and to the Vocalion, Columbia, Parlophone, Duophone, and Velvet Face companies, and to Pathé Freres, for their gifts of records.

All interested in the society are invited to communicate with the hon. secretary, Mr. H. C. Wood, 18, Malvern Road, Nelson.—MARGARET E. WADDINGTON.

(Held over from last month.)

The meeting of the above society held on December 29th, in the Liberal Club, took the form of a competition for chamber music, followed by the playing of some of the recent Parlophone issues, and by a whist drive. Nine records were entered for the competition, and provided a very enjoyable hour. The most popular record was the first portion of Purcell's *Golden Sonata, for two Violins and Piano*, the second the *Finale* from Schumann's *Quintet in E flat, for Piano and String Quartet*, the third a romance for violin, piano, and flute. Space does not permit a detailed account of these or other entries, or of the records so kindly presented by the Parlophone Co. for inclusion in the library.

Mr. Rink, of the H.M.V. Co., addressed the next meeting, held on January 5th, in the lecture room at the Weavers' Institute, and gave an interesting and informative lecture on "The History of the Gramophone." He traced the history of recorded music and of the Gramophone Company from 1850 down to the present day, and followed by demonstrations of the possibilities of a gramophone. A varied musical programme closed the evening, and Mr. Rink was heartily thanked. Future events arranged for the society include musically illustrated talks by Mr. H. Fothergill, Mr. Moses Baritz, Mr. T. Barker, Mr. Atkin, and other musicians well known locally.—MARGARET E. WADDINGTON.

THE NORTH LONDON GRAMOPHONE AND PHONOGRAPH SOCIETY.—Messrs. Saville and Co., 10, Seven Sisters Road, a leading gramophone and record firm of North London, kindly provided one of the latest H.M.V. cabinet models for our demonstration of Saturday, January 9th, an act which was warmly appreciated by a large and interested audience. In conjunction with the new recording this instrument marks a definite forward movement from even the admittedly advanced achievements of this famous company. Tone and volume are still further improved, and analysis rendered really perfect by the new method. The programme took the form of a quadruple bill, for which Messrs. A. Long, G. J. Prentice, L. Rainbird, and D. White were severally responsible. Prominent items were as follows: *Maximilian Robespierre Overture*, National Military Band; *Prologue (Pagliacci)*, Peter Dawson; *Valse Vanite* (saxophone), Wiedoeft; *Aman lassu le stelle* (baritone), Ruffo; *O sole mio*, Caruso; *Fantasia Tarentelle* (piano), A. Martini; *Carmina* (soprano), Alma Gluck; *Coaling*, Peter Dawson; *O Soave Fanciulla* (duet), Melba and Caruso; *Like stars above* (tenor), John McCormack; *No, Pagliacci, non son* and *Il Segreto per esser felice*, Caruso; *Fantasia on Students' songs*, 1st Life Guards Band; *La Villanelle*, Galli-Curci; *Vois ma misère Ladas (Samson and Delilah)* (tenor), Anseau; and *Sonata Pathétique* (Beethoven) (piano), W. Murdoch. These items, and the rest of the programme of about thirty numbers were cordially received by the members and visitors, from the latter of whom three became members. An added attraction consisted in a number of records from the current issue of the Vocalion catalogue, kindly presented to this society by the Vocalion Co., for which the members expressed their hearty thanks. The next meeting, on

Saturday, February 13th, will be occupied with a demonstration of Columbia records by Mr. E. H. Thomas. All communications should be addressed Mr. L. Ivory, 34, Granville Road, Stroud Green, N. 4.—WILLIAM J. ROBINS, *Hon. Recording Secretary*.

NORTH-WEST GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.—On December 13th, the programme consisted chiefly of folk-songs and tunes; the Vocalion catalogue is particularly well endowed with these, to which were added *Cries of London* and the charming and beautifully recorded ballet suite, *Old King Cole*; as this was followed by *Hugh the Drover* the evening had more than a flavour of Vaughan Williams. The recorded versions of the many musical settings of Shakespeare's songs furnished an enjoyable programme for the society's January meeting. Where more than one recording of a song existed, the merits of each were keenly compared, and as usual it was found that the higher priced records did not always carry off the honours. Malcolm McEachern in Sargeant's *Blow, blow, thou winter wind*, was exceptionally good and was finely recorded, but the musical setting was unworthy of the words. The rest of the evening was devoted to hearing new records, the most interesting one being Vocalion's new edition of the *Waltz Song* from *Roméo et Juliette* (sung by Luella Paikin), which compares favourably with Galli-Curci's. In response to demand the society will in future, in addition to the usual monthly meeting, hold a "popular" night on the first Thursday in each month. Will intending members please communicate with the hon. secretary, E. G. LAMBLE, 51, Balmoral Road, London, N.W. 2.

PRESTON GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.—The third season of this society commenced on October 1st, but owing to the poor attendance it became a question whether we should carry on or fade away, but a few stalwarts who understood its real value from a musical point of view determined to put up a big fight to keep it in existence. I am happy to say that their efforts have been rewarded by complete success; at the present time, with only half the season gone, we can boast of eighteen more members than we have ever had at the end of any other season. We hold our meetings at the White Horse Restaurant, Friargate, the first and third Tuesday each month during the season. The subscription, five shillings each person. We have room for a few more members; anyone interested can have all information from the secretary. Our last concert took place on December 15th, on the new H.M.V. gramophone. A very fine programme of music was rendered, which was very much enjoyed by all present, and our thanks are due to Mr. Norwood, one of our local dealers, who kindly lent the machine and records. I am happy to say that we have decided to form a record-lending library; we look upon it as an asset to any society and a means of holding our members together. Any assistance from any record company would be welcome.—W. WEAL, *Hon. Secretary*, 250, Lancaster Road, Preston.

RICHMOND AND DISTRICT GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.—At the last meeting members were called upon to determine the qualities of the records submitted in competition for the best tenor song. Although an exceptionally fine group of records were heard, the audience were very definite as to choice, Mr. Weeks securing first position with *Morning was gleaming with roseate light* from the *Meistersinger* (Wagner), sung by Joseph Hislop, a record of considerable merit. Mr. Paton was second, with seventy-eight marks less than the winner, contributing a delightful Irish ditty, *Molly Brannigan*, by John McCormack. Mr. Sully, with a "new poor" record, *Celeste Aida*, by Leo Slezak, gained third place. As a special musical treat, Mr. A. R. Fittall gave a selection of records from Wagner's last inspiration, *Parsifal*. The artists, who included Ljungberg, Widdop, Radford, and a symphony orchestra of full Wagnerian strength, gave a wonderful interpretation of this work. During the evening records received from the Parlophone Co., Ltd., and the Vocalion Gramophone Co., Ltd., were demonstrated, receiving full appreciation of the members.—T. SYDNEY ALLEN.

SHEFFIELD GRAMOPHONE AND PHONOGRAPH SOCIETY.—Our meeting on December 1st was a very successful one, a large audience being present to hear the new issues of the most important companies. The December lists proved not only of a high order and interesting, but were exceptionally well varied. In the H.M.V. series there was a feast for the classical music lover; we refer to the No. 4 *Symphony* of Tchaikovsky, by the Royal Albert Hall Orchestra, and we certainly do not remember anything better than the first and fourth movements; they are excellent. Then

there were two discs of the Schumann *Quintet*, the inclusion of the Flonzaley instrumentalists guaranteeing a virtuoso rendition. The records by Chaliapine, Pachmann, and Florence Austral should also be "put on the list," whilst so far as the lighter side is concerned the *Wembley Tattoo* by the Coldstream Guards provides a very fine example of military band work. In the Columbia supplement is a noteworthy *Violin Concerto* by Albert Sammons and Symphony Orchestra, as well as a Schubert composition by the London String Quartet and both recordings are worthy of praise. The new records of the Parlophone Co. for November were demonstrated and provided further proof of the high standard attained by this Company. They are wonderful value at the price, and we are glad to see the discs have well established themselves on the market. The plums on this occasion are undoubtedly Mozart's *Symphony in G minor* and *Till Eulenspiegel's Merry Pranks*, by the Opera House Orchestra, under Dr. Weissmann and Ed. Moerike respectively. Both works are splendidly done and can be thoroughly recommended. The two Mozart pieces sung by Jokl, are perfectly rendered, and the contributions by Marek Weber should satisfy the most exacting dance enthusiast. The Vocalion issues embraced some excellent recordings and special mention must be made of those made by the violinist, Jelly d'Aranyi; they are played with an expression and charm which place her amongst the world's greatest instrumentalists. The vocal records this month are well chosen items and altogether it is a specially good list.—THOS. H. BROOKS, *Hon. Press Secretary*.

THE SOUTH-EAST LONDON RECORDED MUSIC SOCIETY.—An extra meeting of the above was held on January 5th at the Clock Tower Chambers, 73, High Street, Lewisham, at 8 p.m. A goodly number of the members gathered together in order to hear the January issues of H.M.V. and the Columbia Co. (the Vocalion records, unfortunately, did not arrive in time), and I am quite sure that this is one of the jolliest ways of spending an evening with a gramophone society. The opportunity given to each individual member to indulge in criticism and make disparaging remarks breeds a spirit of informality that is as precious as untold wealth. Come and help to pronounce judgment and join in the fun! All communications should be addressed to the secretary, 34, Chalsey Road, S.E. 4.—FLORENCE GAMON, *Recording Secretary*.

THE SOUTH LONDON GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.—With new processes and systems looming very largely just now, many gramophone devotees can point to the large number of discs that have become classics during the passage of time. Attention will be drawn to the many fine records that adorn various catalogues, and which with the advent of new methods of recording still appear to be remarkably good. It is certain, however, that the improvement that has steadily taken place in popular taste and the increasing interest taken in the gramophone has made possible the application of these great technical advances. It is with these thoughts in our minds that we listen to what have become old friends and our concert on November 28th was devoted to a number of records of this class that "went down," as the saying is, with éclat. It will be sufficient to mention Caruso in *O Paradiso*, two movements from the Bach *Suite for flute and strings*; a movement from the Schumann *Pianoforte quintet* (Vocalion version), and from the Mozart *Trio in E major*, and Casals in the Chopin *Nocturne in E flat*. In addition to these there were heard several novelties which may be enumerated. Two records only by the new process were heard, the Moszkowski *Malaguena* and the *Soldier's Chorus from Faust*, by the Apollo Male Chorus. During the playing of the last a Lifebelt was tried with quite good results, one of which was to round off a seeming hardness when played in the usual way. A discovery was a Spanish song, *Noche Feliz*, by Caruso, given with splendid verve and insight, and there was also Gogorza in *La Partida*, which is preferable to Galli-Curci's rendering, which misses the spirit. Elena Gerhardt, in Schubert's *Das lied im Grünen*, Paderewski playing Schubert's *Impromptu in B flat*, and a singer new to the society, Lazzari, who gave *Il lacerato spirito*, served to complete a very interesting series of programmes. The concert-givers were Messrs. S. Redstone, C. Sterry, and F. Horley. The Vocalion Co. have decided to submit periodically a selection from new records, and it is hoped to compile a programme from these at the next meeting on January 2nd.—S. F. D. HOWARTH, *Reporting Secretary*.

(Held over from last month.)

[Further reports from Blackpool G. S., East London G. S., Leicester G. S. Manchester G. S. and South-East London R. M. S. are held over.]

Analytical Notes and First Reviews

CHAMBER MUSIC

COLUMBIA.—L.1698–1702 (five 12in. records in album, 32s. 6d.).—**Quintet in A major, Op. 114** ("The Trout") (Schubert). Eulenburg min. score. And **Interludium in Modo Antico, Op. 15** (Glazounov), played by the London String Quartet.

COLUMBIA.—L.1704–1705 (12in., 6s. 6d. each).—**The London String Quartet: Three Idylls** (Frank Bridge).

COLUMBIA.—3739 (10in., 3s.).—**The Cherniavsky Trio: Trio in G major (Rondo all'Ongarese)** (Haydn) and **Serenade** (Widor).

POLYDOR.—72797 (12in., 6s. 9d.).—**The Busch Quartet: Quartet in G major (Scherzo)** (Schubert) and **Quartet in E minor (Prestissimo)** (Verdi).

The Columbia Company, with a quintet, a quartet, and a piano sonata to its credit this month, has deserved well of readers of THE GRAMOPHONE. I have not had time to give the records of the "Trout" quintet the thorough examination they deserve; but I have heard the set through twice and I am satisfied that we have here something that will commend itself to all lovers of Schubert's chamber music.

That the work is full of delightful things goes without saying; but I am not convinced that it is a true masterpiece; to me it seems to contain too much repetition. This is evident from the analysis issued by the company with the records, but the full extent to which Schubert has gone out of his way to save himself trouble (if I may be permitted the paradox) only appears after a closer examination. In the first movement the principal subject is announced in A and the second (naturally enough) in E; by beginning his recapitulation in D (instead of A, as would be usual) the composer is able to make this last section an exact repetition of the exposition, barring a short cut. The same thing occurs in the *Finale*, the last side (in the set of records) being to all intents and purposes merely a replica of the previous one transposed up a fifth; and again in the second movement Schubert seems chary of exercising his inventive faculty, side four being almost, though not quite, a simple transposition of side three.

There remain the *Scherzo*, which is wholly delightful, and the variations that give the quintet its name. The melody of these is a charming one, but I cannot help feeling that the first three variations are a little mechanical. The last three are better, and it is interesting to compare Schubert's methods here with those he employs in the last three variations of the well-known *Impromptu* in B flat for piano, which Paderewski has played for H.M.V.

The organisation that has recorded this work (complete and with a liberal allowance of repeats) bears no name, but a glance at the *personnel* tells us that we are in the hands of artists of proved capacity. I found no fault with the playing throughout, although I felt that greater attention to light and shade would have given more life to the proceedings. The very high violin trills in the first variation of the fourth movement are rather squeaky, but it is difficult to tell whether playing or recording are to blame.

The Columbia Company deserves our admiration for its courage in undertaking such a hard task as the reproduction of this quintet. It is never easy to record five separate instruments clearly and preserve a good balance between them. But when two of these instruments are the 'cello and double bass, whose lowest notes even the new H.M.V. machines seldom reproduce with complete success, and when a third of them is the piano, which is notoriously unwilling to blend with the strings, then indeed the intricacy of the problem might daunt even the boldest. Columbia has not produced a perfect record—the lower instruments in particular are often submerged—but until reproduction has been improved beyond our wildest dreams we are not likely to get a better.

The Glazounov *Interludium* on the odd side is one of the happiest productions of that often dull writer. I fancy I have heard and liked another record of it by the Flonzaley Quartet; but this rendering by the London String Quartet is in all respects thoroughly satisfactory.

Bridge's *Three Idylls* have already been recorded for H.M.V. by the *Virtuoso Quartet*. I have not had an opportunity of comparing

the two versions, nor have I been able to obtain a score, so I am labouring under a heavy burden of ignorance. But if the H.M.V. set of records was complete presumably this is too, since it takes up the same number of sides. As to rendering and reproduction I am at least sure that the H.M.V. version can be no finer than this one by the *London String Quartet*. Never have I heard better balance in a quartet on the gramophone, and the 'cello—that *bête noir* of the experts—has been recorded almost to perfection. The music, modern but free from eccentricity, is too simple to need explanation; musicianly and sincere throughout, it makes a deep impression in spite of the lack of any very distinguished thematic material. The first two *Idylls* are couched in a mood of quiet reflection blended with strong emotion. The outlines of the third are more distinct, its rhythms more definite; it will probably prove the most popular of the three and is possibly the best.

Cherniavsky Trio.—Haydn at his jolliest is always worth listening to, even when, as here, the tone has a bit of an "edge" to it. Widor's *Serenade*, on the other hand, is little more than "restaurant music," with the two strings playing a great deal in octaves together. Rendering and recording are both adequate without being exceptional.

Busch Quartet.—Whether the Busch Quartet deliberately set these two movements side by side—or rather back to back—on the same record I do not know; but at any rate the juxtaposition is interesting. Both movements are scherzos, both start with a vivacious section in a minor key, both move to a major key for a less breathless *trio*, and in both *trios*, curiously enough, the 'cello assumes a rôle of unusual importance. It is seldom indeed that such diverse composers as Schubert and Verdi meet on common ground like this! I think we must admit that in the comparison that is forced upon us Schubert has the best of it; his instruments chatter away to one another on terms of perfect equality, and their delightful little frolic would be very hard to match. Verdi manages to hold his own in the opening, but his 'cello keeps the stage a little too selfishly in the *trio*, and the melody it plays is just a shade too suave, although surprisingly restrained for a composer whose real medium was opera, and Italian opera at that! If this is a fair sample of its quality, the work, which was written about a year after the first production of *Aida*, should be played more often; though it is the only quartet that bears his name it shows that Verdi's choice of opera as a field for his genius was deliberate and by no means forced upon him by inability or unwillingness to master the more austere branches of musical art.

The Busch Quartet plays both pieces capably and sympathetically, in spite of a trace of roughness here and there, and the recording is satisfactory—a trifle on the soft side, perhaps, but in these days of increased gramophonic resonance that is not without its advantages.

PETER LATHAM.

ORCHESTRAL

POLYDOR.

69760, 69761, 69762, and 69763 (12in., 5s. 9d. each).—**Kapelle der Staatsoper, Berlin**, conducted by Otto Klemperer: **Symphony No. 1** (Beethoven) with (on last side) **Wendling Quartet: Minuet from String Quartet in A, Op. 18, No. 5** (Beethoven). Eulenburg min. score; also in Philharmonia.

62462 (10in., 4s. 6d.).—**Kapelle der Staatsoper, Berlin: Waltz from Wildschütz and Holzschuhtanz from Zar und Zimmermann** (Lortzing).

HIS MASTER'S VOICE.

D.1046 (12in., 6s. 6d.).—**Philadelphia Symphony Orchestra: Marche Slav** (Tchaikovsky).

D.1051 and 1052 (12in., 13s.).—**Royal Albert Hall Orchestra** conducted by Ronald: **Leonora Overture No. 3** (Beethoven) and (one side) **Rosamunde Ballet Music** (Schubert). Eulenburg min. score; also in Philharmonia.

C.1233 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—**De Groot and Orchestra: Un sonnet d'amour and La Tarantelle Frétilante from Petite Suite de Concert** (Coleridge-Taylor).

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VOCALION.

A.0249 (12in., 5s. 6d.).—**Aeolian Orchestra**, conducted by the composer: **The Wasps Overture** (Vaughan Williams).

K.05215 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—**Modern Chamber Orchestra**, conducted by Stanley Chapple: **Two Interludes from Falstaff and Canto Popolare from In the South** (Elgar).

A.0252 and 0253 (12in., 11s.).—**Adila Fachiri and Jelly d'Aranyi**, with orchestra conducted by S. Chapple: **Concerto in D minor for two violins** (Bach). Eulenburg.

PARLOPHONE.

E.10405 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—**Edith Lorand Orchestra**: **Fantasia, La Fille de Madame Angot** (Lecocq).

E.10406 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—**Edith Lorand Orchestra**: **Madrigal, Op. 65, No. 2** (Schmalstich) and **Gavotte** (Gossec).

E.10401 and 10402 (12in., 9s.).—**Orchestra of State Opera House, Berlin**: **Sakuntala Overture** (Goldmark).

E.10407 and 10408 (12in., 9s.).—**Barjanski** ('cello) with orchestra: **Concerto in G minor** (Handel) and (one side) **Grete Eweler Quartet: Minuet from Quartet in C, K. 465** (Mozart).

BELTONE.

911 (10in., 2s. 6d.).—**Sutherland Orchestra**: **Dream Dances, Nos. 1 and 2** (Coleridge-Taylor).

ACO.

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COLUMBIA.

3846 (10in., 3s.).—**Russian Balalaika Orchestra**: **Rondo a la Turka** (Mozart) and **Polka "Ojra"** (Russian Air).

Polydor.—Breaks: Side 1, end of exposition (page 11, Eulenburg); side 2, end of first movement; side 3, page 31, line 2, bar 4; side 4, end of slow movement; side 5, end of Minuet; side 6, page 55, line 2, bar 1; side 7, end of last movement.

It is a delightful thing to watch, in the first three symphonies of Beethoven, the burgeoning of a mind, keen, active, teeming with ideas, yet so subtle and delicate in giving them out. In the very first symphony, along with bits of pure Haydn and Mozart (because he was living in the midst of the fragrance and power of their work), there are innovations, and such felicities in their use. Mere newness counts for little; any fool can do *different* things; the great man is he who knows what new things are worth doing, and what to do with his novelties when he has thought of them. There are technical things in this symphony that mark the advance of the constructive mind from the forms of Haydn and Mozart—the first, second, and last movements being all in "sonata" or first movement form; his casting the Minuet (so-called) as a Scherzo, actually; the opening not with the chord of the key we are in, but with that series of gentle mystifications, that beginning in key F with every appearance of certainty, touches on a minor key, strides into G major, and finally slips into its real key of C. Then the orchestration is fuller than his predecessors' usual complement. He uses the complete wood-wind force—a pair each of flutes, oboes, clarinets, and bassoons, only (as yet) two horns, a pair of trumpets, drums, and the strings, whereas they began with only a couple of pairs of wind, apart from the full string band. His lowest strings still play the same part—basses and 'cellos. The double-bass was not yet let out of double harness, to run by himself, we see. The trumpets were very limited in those days, and so were the horns. Beethoven shows that he can think of them as something more than mere fillers-up, in such a place as that on page 15 of the Eulenburg score, where they give out a repeated octave E, while the strings dash up below them. Here they give not only body, but colour and contrast. The drums have a special little look in here and there, too. Observe, for instance, the passage near the end of side 3, where the strings trot off with triplets, and the drum keeps demurely to a rhythm of unequal

twos, making a happy little jostle between the two of them. There are all sorts of other fascinating little bits of artistry to observe in the symphony, that would take a page to tell of. It is a never-failing delight, as much in this way as for its gaiety and polish, its clarity and winsomeness.

This is not the new-fashioned recording, as we have it in this country, but there is much to be said for the old, when a work comes off sweetly, in smaller proportions than the new recording affords. The *First* of Beethoven is of such pellucid simplicity, in the scoring, that we really do not want a big force, or a big volume. The string bass is not strong here, but it tells better than might have been expected. There is a sprightliness and grace in the phrasing of the first movement that I like. The upper wood-wind is a trifle shrill. The slower pace for the meditative passage at page 8, after the two chief themes have been enunciated, is poetical and practical.

The *Andante* is on the slow side. This gives it quite a different cast from most performances. I like the unified tone in this. There is a certain spaciousness about the performance, and the contrasts of tone-power are good. The neatness of the bowing is admirable. The drums are very tiny indeed. Those varieties of rhythm are enchantingly prettily contrived by Beethoven! This performance has a real air about it, of Mozartian grace and Beethovenian personality. The light, chatty work in the *Finale* comes off best of all. The wood-wind is again a trifle hard, but efficient. It is capital to feel those string fellows bowing, as you can.

It is unusual to have a quartet movement on the back of a symphonic disc. The label omits to say from which quartet the Minuet is taken. It is an interesting blend of concert-room music and suggestion of peasant song (in the Trio). The playing is flexible. One cannot particularly grumble at the first violin's being prominent, because there is little interweaving of parts. The lower strings could have stood out a little more with advantage. Their tone is very pleasing.

Lortzing (1803–1851) was a celebrated German composer of light opera. The "clog dance" from the opera *King and Carpenter* and the waltz from another opera, *The Poacher*, are fair specimens, the latter rather a conventional one, of his talent. There is a homely German flavour in the clog dance. The playing is not remarkable in any way. In this record (as in those of the symphony) a good deal of scratch is apparent.

H.M.V.—One orchestral record that brings in a chorus is mentioned in the separate note on choral records. The new reproducing methods, that are specially competent to give greater volume and an effect of massiveness, are applied with not inappropriate effect to the Tchaikovsky March, about which something was said last month. Here it is given in full. It is quite well done. Some of the lower sounds are well worth hearing, to show that the new method really is an advance on the old, in some very important ways. The wood-wind, too, is admirably full.

The making of the *Leonora Overture No. 3* (actually the second of the four he wrote for the opera *Fidelio*) shows that side of Beethoven that some have thought over-fincial—the mind that was not satisfied with things as they first came to it. The opera was largely revised for the revival in 1806, the year after it was produced in Vienna. The opera never was great as a work of drama. Rather, we seek the finest flower of drama in his overtures and symphonies. I do not feel the full force of the drama in this performance. There is scarcely a real *pp*, for one thing (the nearest to it is on page 45). We miss the feeling of suspense or anxiety. The more I hear of the new massed string tone the less I like it. In that *pp* passage at the end of page 3 (first violins answered by flute) the strings sound like a young trumpet, no less. The upper strings are very clear and, of course, strong in their loud passage work, in such places as pages 14 and 15. The basses I find retiring. Wood-wind records well. On the whole I think the records do not give a true representation of Beethoven, though, after their kind, they are well in the forefront of the new variety, for volume and clarity.

Breaks: Side 1, page 19, bar 6; side 2, page 51, bar 5.

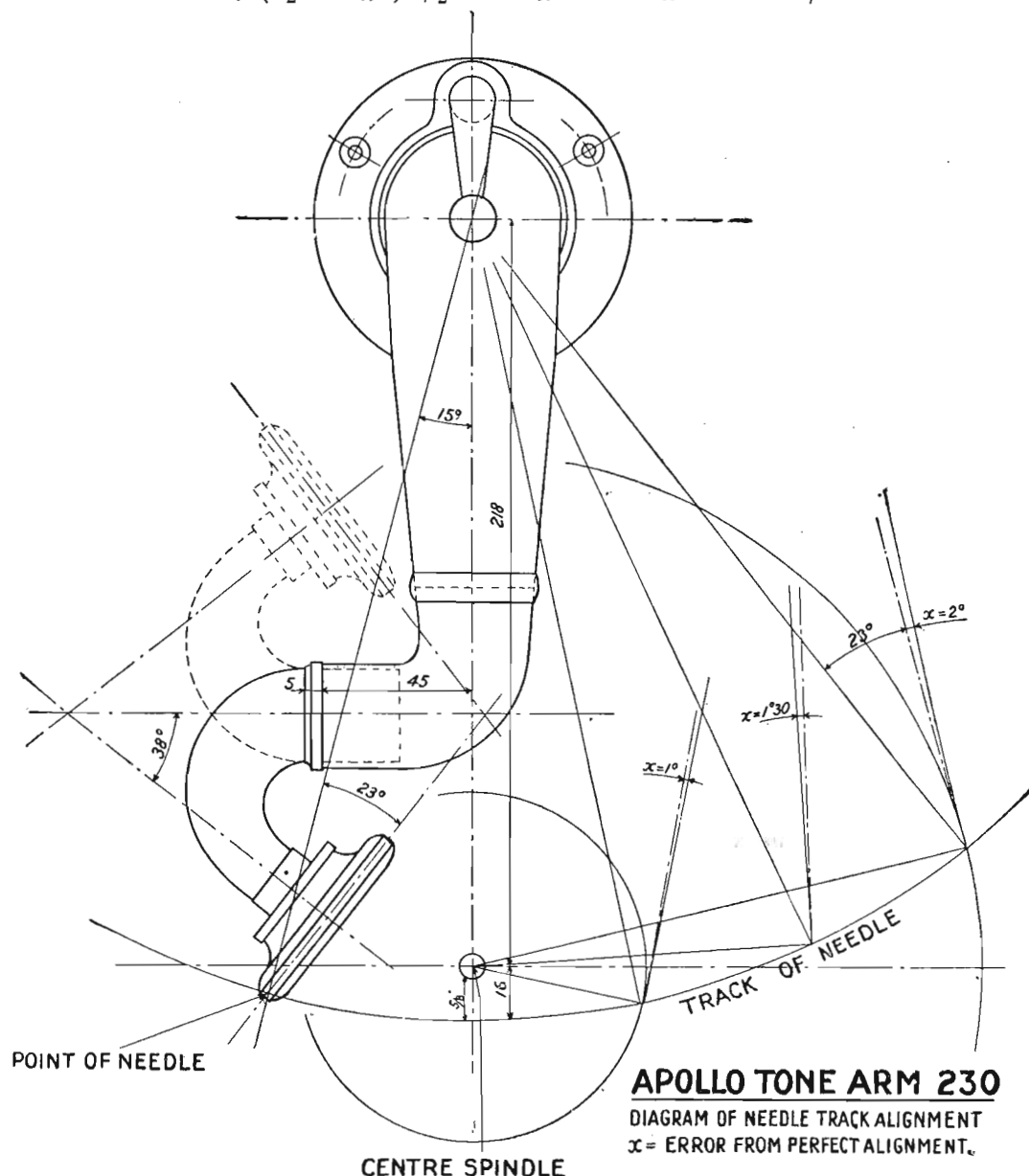
The Schubert music is, like the Beethoven, played a little stodgily, rhythmically. I like its balance, and the tone is inoffensive.

The *Sonnet d'Amour* is rather stark—after modern love-making methods, perhaps. The instruments do not merge into each other well. The *Tarantella* is equally boldly struck off, and, from its nature, is more effective, though I do not much care for the xylophonic effect of (I presume) the plucked strings in the middle part.

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Vocalion.—The composer of the *Wasps Overture* has said that the themes of the piece, which forms part of the incidental music written (1909) for a performance at Cambridge of the comedy of that name by Aristophanes, are thematically connected with the angry buzzings of the wasps, and their stinging. The old songs of Phrynicus mentioned in the play also come in, and reference is made to the final reconciliation of Philocleon and his son Bdelycleon. Besides the Vaughan Williams the folk-song enthusiast, there are traces (not unwelcome ones, to the average music-lover, I think) of pleasant lyrical fancy of the operatic kind. Compare, by the way, the maturer (and curiously Puccini-like) scenes for Hugh and Mary, in *Hugh the Drover*. The bustle of this overture shows, too, traces of what seems to me a certain ineffectiveness of the composer when he wants to become lively. He seems to go round in circles, with a little tune too often repeated. The overture is really quite jolly—perhaps as easy a thing to like as V. W. has ever done.

The *Canto Popolare* is a tune—a mere fragment—from *In the South*, which has already been done by H.M.V. It is not, as some presumed, an Italian song heard by the composer during the holiday he spent in that country in 1903-4.

Newman tells us that the overture is said to have been immediately inspired by the thoughts that came to the composer on an afternoon in the Vale of Andora. The viola tune, with its liquid accompaniment, expresses sweet thoughts, but obviously in Elgarian, not Italian, speech. The other melody that is heard in the course of this fragment (the one with a triplet figure in it, one inch from the inside of the cut portion, and again a quarter of an inch from the end) is an echo of the work's vigorous opening theme. Apart from a slight paleness in the wood-wind, the playing is very competent. The first of the two *Falstaff* interludes comes at the end of the second scene of Elgar's amazing piece of programme music—perhaps the most detailed work of that kind in existence. *Falstaff*, after a scene of revelry at the "Boar's Head," sleeps, and dreams of the days when he was a happy page to the Duke of Norfolk. This "Dream Interlude," with its courtly grace and simple gusto, is well played. The solo violin seems just a shade coarse. The second interlude is entitled "Gloucestershire, Shallow's Orchard." Here *Falstaff* spent a night. The sound of pipe and tabor evokes the rustic scene. We ought to have the whole of the *Falstaff* work. It gives a wonderful impression of the *Falstaff* of the historical plays, not the bully and woman-hunter of *The Merry Wives*. There is no finer "symphonic study" in musical literature.

A movement of the Bach *Double Violin Concerto* (annotated in March, page 386) has already been done by Vocalion, with piano (D.02107). The same artists took part as are heard here. Columbia has also done the whole work with orchestra. Miss d'Aranyi and her sister (who, by the way, are to play the work at the symphony concert at Queen's Hall on February 6th) let themselves go here, and if the orchestral bass had been powerful enough to define the changes of harmony we should have had almost complete enjoyment. A little more light and shade on everybody's part is the only other thing wanting.

The *Largo*, that in the Columbia performance was not quite successful, I thought, is richer than on those discs, but again everyone is too strenuous. We want them to distil the essence of the spirit of heart's-ease. A gentler, more caressing touch is all that is needed.

This slow movement goes over on to side 3 (breaking at the top of page 16), and includes part of the last movement (the side ending at page 23, bar 5). In the passage of chords for the soloists that comes just before the break the orchestra ought to be heard more clearly. For once the two violins are here merely giving the framework of the harmony.

One's ideal performance of such a difficult work will probably never come off. This on the records is not very far from it—no further than most earthly achievements are from the heavenly ideal, born in the composer's mind, and set down in a kind of sketchy shorthand of notes. They cannot represent his ideas perfectly. We, translating the notes, must generally be satisfied with those, plus a little inspiration. When inspiration transcends all, heaven will not be far off. Meanwhile we are conducted by such artists as these to a mountain whence we may view the glories that some day are to burst upon our sight.

Parlophone.—*Madame Angot* need not detain us long. These are very obvious tunes indeed. They went down all right in their day, but surely few people like their melodies to be so very childish now. The playing is bold, well befitting the gaudy tunes. The

soloist is richly sentimental in the *Madrigal*, and archly unsophisticated in the *Gavotte*. Neither piece is of the least significance. These are the tunes that any theatre musician throws off, at eleven at night, when he hears the telephoned demand: "Something for the third act; must have it first thing to-morrow—it's to be played at night!"

Sakuntala is really a symphonic poem, founded on the Hindoo drama of that name, written 500-600 B.C. Goldmark tells how *Sakuntala*, the daughter of a nymph, was concealed in a grove by her father. She is found by King Duschjanta, wooed, and won. She is to follow him in a little, to his palace. He will recognise her by a ring. A magician causes the king to forget his wife, and *Sakuntala* loses the ring in a river. At the palace the king denies her, her friends forsake her, and her mother abducts her. A fisherman finds the ring and takes it to Duschjanta. The spell is broken, and he mourns for his lost love. Spurred to action, he fights the magician and his wicked crew, rescues *Sakuntala*, and lives happily ever after.

I have never discovered just how the music fits the story. The chief themes are: (1) one-third of the way through side 1, 'cellos and clarinets. (2) Two-thirds through: violins and oboe, accompanied by the rhythm of theme I. (3) Half an inch from inside of side 1, brass. This is the second main theme (the work being cast in "sonata" or "first movement" form). The "development" begins (oboe and cor anglais) with a major version of theme 2. Part of the treatment of this melody is cut out, and the martial theme 3 is dealt with. Side 2 ends with a repetition of the opening slow, solemn passage, which brings the "recapitulation" of the former ideas, with some varied treatment, different from that in the "exposition."

This is good romantic stuff, recorded with praiseworthy clarity and breadth. The string tone is of the older, sweeter type. It is really a relief, after the sometimes distressing new-recording tone, to get back to the older gentleness, even if we sacrifice volume in so doing. I doubt if it is really worth Parlophone's while to spend four sides on this music, which is neither very definitely programmatic nor very thrilling. In the Handel some "wolf-y" notes are found. The soloist gets slightly ahead of the band. I should have liked rather more boldness and decision on their part. Is the order of the movements altered? The slow and quick ones do not alternate here, as was the custom in Handel's concertos. I cannot trace a printed score of this music, and the producers (in England) have no information, at the moment. The soloist draws a big tone, and with a little more attention to rhythmic precision he would be an admirable interpreter. The first movement shows the deeper, more expressive side of Handel. He was a consummate workman, but he belonged to an age of artificiality, and worked so rapidly that he not infrequently dropped below his best. About half of most of his instrumental works is first class, the other half capable filling-up matter. At his best, instrumentally, he rises to Bach's level, and does so still more frequently in his vocal work. But John Sebastian is the greater man because his off-days were fewer. He maintains a glorious level more consistently than does Handel. But why cannot we have more of the best of George Frederick—some of the organ concertos, now that the kist o' whistles can be recorded so much better, and certainly a good batch of oratorio and opera songs, with some unhackneyed choruses? The Mozart Minuet is a happy make-weight. Its sinuous grace and dove-tailing interplay are reasonably well, if not too subtly, presented. The balance is good.

Beltona.—Good routine work. I like the way they hang together.

Aco.—The same old platitudes of light music during the past twenty years. There is a clear echo of Delibes near the end of No. 3. Jog-trot stuff, a little coarse in sound, but that is probably the music's fault, less than the players'.

Brunswick.—The American orchestras, even the finest, record pretty thin music—such a lot of slight pieces. The Schumann is dragged out, with two many even stresses. The Dvorák is splendidly disciplined playing. The first theme might have a little more happy insouciance in it. The playing in general suits this most attractive music extremely well.

Columbia.—I don't know where this polka came from; certainly it is no Russian tune, but a mid-nineteenth century café affair. I expect habitués of the Empire in the seventies would recognise its style.

The Mozart (last movement from the *Sonata in A*) goes very well on these hard, metallic-toned instruments. They are not at all unpleasant—for a short spell. They record extremely well.

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| | Give a man a horse he can ride (Samuel Liddle). Piano Acc. | (Baritone) |
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Chopin's Sonata in B Minor

COLUMBIA.—L.1695-1697 (12in., 6s. 6d. each).—Percy Grainger: Sonata in B minor, Op. 58 (Chopin).

Although Chopin's genius was not of the kind that expresses itself naturally within the strict limits of the sonata he has left us three specimens of this form; the first, in C minor, is seldom played, and perhaps deserves no better fate; the second, the one containing the Funeral March, is much better known and perhaps the finest of the three; but the third, the work before us, deficient as it is from the formal standpoint, includes nevertheless much that is in the composer's most characteristic vein. It is an old favourite of mine and I am very glad it has been recorded.

Side 1.—The first subject is stated at the very beginning, a vigorous phrase that gives rise to some interesting if rather incoherent developments. About half way through the side there emerges a lovely, song-like melody, the second subject, and to this is added a series of lyrical ideas, typical of Chopin at his best. The side breaks off one bar before the end of the exposition.

Side 2.—The working out is rather long, each subject being treated in turn, and somewhat chaotic; but the composer shortens his recapitulation by the singular device of omitting the first subject altogether and returning to his original material a little before the entry of the second. The break occurs about half way through the recapitulation.

Side 3.—The rest of the recapitulation and a very brief *coda* complete the first movement and we pass to the *Scherzo*, a brilliant affair with a quiet *trio* in the middle that requires no further comment.

Side 4.—The romantic melody of the slow movement is introduced after three and a half bars of preluding, and pursues its languorous way to the middle of the side, when a bridge-passage leads to the entrance of triplets and the second part of the movement. This section is too long and I can forgive Percy Grainger for cutting bars 43-58.

Side 5 contains the remaining bars of the triplet episode and then conducts us by means of a most original modulation back to the first tune, a re-statement of which, with a short *coda*, brings the movement to an end.

Side 6.—The *Finale* shows us Chopin in an almost boisterous mood. Its structure is of the simplest, consisting merely of the repetition (alternately) of two contrasted ideas—and a *coda*. Of development there is none, although the first theme is given a more elaborate accompaniment each time it appears. But the swinging rhythm of the first subject and the brilliance of the second do much to make up for the movement's architectural deficiencies and give it a tonic quality that is wildly exhilarating. The original statement of the first subject, by the way, is included on *Side 5*.

To have contained this sonata (complete but for the cut I have mentioned) on three records is an achievement on which I congratulate the company. I have no fault to find with the recording, although there are moments when the surface is not quite up to the best *Columbia* standards; but Percy Grainger's rendering is not, I think, very sympathetic. The first and third movements lack poetry and the pianist's excessive use of *rubato* and changes of *tempo*, (which accentuate instead of concealing the structural weakness of the work), is only troublesome. He is more successful in the brilliant movements, the second and fourth. I recommend the use of a fibre needle throughout; with anything else the tone in the loud passages has a percussive force that few instruments will reproduce satisfactorily.

PIANOFORTE.

ACO.—G.15851 (10in., 2s. 6d.).—Maurice Cole: To the Spring, Op. 43, No. 6 (Grieg) and L'Aveu, Op. 51, No. 2 (Leschetisky).

BELTONE.—6032 (10in., 3s.).—Ethel Attwood: Spanish Dance, No. 5 (Granados) and Golliwog's Cake-walk (Debussy).

COLUMBIA.—L.1707 (12in., 6s. 6d.).—William Murdoch: El Puerto (Albeniz) and Cubana (De Falla).

H.M.V.—D.1053 (12in., 6s. 6d.).—Harold Samuel: Prelude, Allemande, and Couranti from the Partita in B flat (Bach).

VOCALION.—K.05214 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—York Bowen: Second Arabesque in A (Debussy) and Prelude in G minor (Rachmaninoff).

Maurice Cole.—Leschetisky's *L'Aveu* is pleasant, well-made music of no great distinction; with the Grieg piece most people are probably familiar. Maurice Cole plays both adequately; they do not offer much scope for any higher gifts he may possess. My pressing of the record had a rather bad surface and the tone, though good in places, was far from consistent—the opening bars of the Grieg were particularly weak. Still one cannot expect everything for 2s. 6d.!

Ethel Attwood rather diminishes the value of an otherwise pleasing record of the *Golliwog's Cake-walk* by some exaggeration in the middle section which interferes with the rhythmic balance; she is happier in the *Spanish Dance*. The recording is something less than perfect, especially in this latter number, where the loud passages are more than my instrument will bear. Possibly this may be the fault of the playing, but in any case the company must bear the responsibility for a rather noisy surface. Having said this I will add that the general effect is by no means bad.

William Murdoch provides a first-rate record. He has selected from the works of Albeniz and de Falla, two of the best representatives of the Spanish school, two pieces with strong, characteristic rhythms, suggestive of Spanish dance music at its best, and developed with skill and imagination. The composers' intentions, we feel, are fully understood by the executant who possesses also the technical ability to convey his interpretation in his rendering. The recording is on a level with the music and the playing; I experimented with a fibre needle in the *Cubana* and found it satisfactory, though the *pianissimo* passages become a trifle too soft.

Harold Samuel.—*Partita* is here merely the equivalent of the more familiar French word *Suite*. Samuel gives us the opening three movements of a work of this kind by Bach, the first of six *Partitas* that the composer wrote for the keyboard instrument. A *Sarabande*, two *Menuets*, and a *Gigue* remain to be issued if we are to have the complete set of dances, and these, I hope, will follow very shortly. If they do, the records will form a valuable series; Bach is at his best here and Samuel gives us the splendid interpretation we expect from him. The recording, though not above criticism, is none the less good on the whole (here again I found fibre more satisfactory than steel), and taking things all round this and Murdoch's are the two records I should select for purchase out of the month's instrumental list. There are no cuts; one of the repeats is omitted, but this is of little consequence.

York Bowen.—As a specimen of piano reproduction this record is very good and I have no hesitation whatever in recommending it to all and sundry. Both pieces are of that excellent sort that appeal to nearly everybody. The G major *Arabesque* of Debussy is an early work, a sister of the more familiar one in E; it shows what a truly creative mind can do even within the limited compass of the *Morceau de salon*, though it affords only a few hints of the composer's mature style. Rachmaninoff's G minor *Prelude*, well written, rhythmic, and not without a touch of humour, is in my opinion a far better piece of work than our old friend in C sharp minor. It is by no means easy to play, but both here and in the Debussy York Bowen shows himself a capable pianist and a sensitive artist.

VIOLIN.

ACO.—G.15820 (10in., 2s. 6d.).—Eileen Andjelkovitch: The Answer (Wolstenholme-Moffat) and Träumerei (Schumann-Hofmann).

ACO.—G.15871 (10in., 2s. 6d.).—Frank Bilbe: Hungarian Dance, No. 6 (Brahms-Hubay) and Romance, Op. 22 (Wieniawski).

BRUNSWICK.—50066 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—Albert Spalding: Ave Maria (Schubert-Wilhelmj) and On Wings of Song (Mendelssohn).


H.M.V.—D.B.904 (12in., 8s. 6d.).—Jacques Thibaud: Romance in F (Beethoven).

H.M.V.—D.A.745 (10in., 6s.).—Fritz Kreisler: Aloha oe (Lilinalani-Kreisler) and From the Land of the Sky-blue Water (Cadman).

POLYDOR.—62469 (10in., 4s. 6d.).—Professor Adolf Busch: Romantische Stücke (Dvorák) and Aria (Porpoza-Corti).

VOCALION.—K.05209 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—Phyllis Allan: From the Rialto and Morning Song (Easthope Martin).

ZONOPHONE.—2663 (10in., 2s. 6d.).—Marjorie Hayward: Songs my mother taught me (Dvorák) and Intermezzo from Adriana Lecouvreur (Giléa).



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Before I review these records in detail may I record my emphatic protest against the music which violinists and other string players insist on serving up to us? With signal exceptions, which I gratefully acknowledge, they treat us as the merest children, incapable of appreciating any but the simplest, the most sentimental, and often the most blatant tunes; and these they do not cull, as a rule, from their own repertoire, but ravish from the pianist or the singer. A comparison of the month's issues for piano and for solo strings shows that I do not complain without reason. I know that the amount of good piano music in existence is much larger than that of good violin music, while the viola and 'cello are still more inadequately provided for. But is this really the best that the string-players can do? They manage better at their concerts, and at times one is tempted to wonder whether the well-worn formula of the bulletins, "— has chosen this month" accurately represents what has happened.

Thibaud.—Here, at any rate, is a record I can honestly recommend. Beethoven wrote two *Romances* for Violin, pieces in a less strict and more rhapsodical form than he was wont to use in his sonatas. Any analysis of the present work would be superfluous; the composer is here in one of his more serene moods and no one will have any difficulty in following the drift of his thought. The playing is good, and so is the surface of the record, but I have heard better reproduction, and we expect the best on H.M.V. red label. The violin tone is not consistently beautiful (though there are many fine moments) and the prominence of some unwanted harmonics rather spoils the effect of the final chords on the piano. But possibly my advance pressing must bear the whole of the blame, and I strongly advise readers to hear this otherwise excellent record for themselves.

Apart from Thibaud's *Romance* the month's crop of violin solos contains nothing very remarkable from the musical point of view, the pieces belonging mostly to that patch of common ground which is shared by such different kinds of artist as Kreisler and De Groot. On the other hand, the recording is good in most cases—none of the discs offend in the matter of scratch—and the playing sometimes more than good. *Kreisler's* record strikes me as the best (though the music here is exceptionally poor—why, oh why does he do it?), but *Marjorie Hayward* also provides attractive fare and I quite definitely liked the somewhat luscious *Intermezzo* from *Adriana Lecouvreur*. In one way, too, I am rather glad she gives us *Songs my mother taught me*, arrangement though it be, since it shows at least that Dvorák could write a good tune, a gift that is not apparent in the rather dull example of his work played by *Professor Busch*. The Professor, however, has the great merit of sincerity and in the *Porpoza-Corti Aria* he almost persuades us that the music is not the string of sentimental commonplaces that our instinct tells us it is. *Eileen Andjelkovich* is a violinist who is new to me, though I understand that several records of hers have been issued. I am afraid I do not like her; her technique is all right, but her interpretations are too haphazard and unbalanced for my taste. Nor do I feel enthusiastic about *Frank Bilbe*; he plays the *Wieniawsky Romance* pleasantly enough, to be sure, but the fevered and disjointed opium-dream on the other side is a travesty of Brahms' intentions. The surface of this record is none too good either. Then there is *Albert Spalding*, who plays two song arrangements—both in the same way, the first verse in the low register, the second an octave or two higher. Why has this obvious and silly device been allowed to become a gramophonic formula? And why must the pianist transform Schubert's accompaniment of the second verse of the *Ave Maria* into those exasperating arpeggios? To those whose love of good tunes is sufficient to outweigh even serious disadvantages in their presentation I can recommend this record—but to no others.

I was agreeably surprised by the Easthope Martin record played by Miss Allan. The music shows more subtlety and originality than I have been wont to expect from this composer, and the harmony is unexpectedly interesting. This applies particularly to *From the Rialto*, quite a charming composition. *Morning Song* is less enterprising. Miss Allan gets a slight edge to her tone when she becomes excited (or is the recording to blame?), but otherwise she plays like a musician. The reproduction, though very fair, is a little unequal, but the surface, at any rate, is good.

VIOLA.

VOCALION.—X.9696 (10in., 3s.).—**Lionel Tertis:** *Les Rêves* (Rebikow, arranged Tertis) and *Sunset* (Tertis).

We can all recognise the "Tertis-touch" on the viola, and we know that it is like no other; yet somehow I do not think this record will set the Thames on fire. For one thing the surface is

none too good, though I could have borne with this if I had found outstanding merit elsewhere. The trouble is, I suppose, that there is so little music written for the viola that the executant has to condescend occasionally to something lower than the highest or stop playing altogether. *Les Rêves*, anyhow, is not very interesting, and Tertis's own *Sunset*, though musicianly, is in no wise arresting. But those who can appreciate good playing for its own sake will find it here.

'CELLO.

COLUMBIA.—D.1533 (10in., 4s. 6d.).—**W. H. Squire:** *Arietta* (G. A. Alcock) and *Jig* (Charles Wood).

VOCALION.—X.9695 (10in., 3s.).—**Howard Bliss:** *Madrigal*, No. 4 (Gillet) and *Berceuse*, Op. 113, No. 4 (Goltermann).

VOCALION.—X.9711 (10in., 3s.).—**Howard Bliss:** *Dolly Berceuse*, Op. 56, No. 1 (Fauré) and *Menuet* (Rameau, arr. Salmon).

Squire's record calls for little comment. The *Jig* is quite attractive, although rather short measure; the *Arietta's* on the familiar sentimental lines, but better than most of its kind. The recording is good.

Bliss.—I like Bliss's playing this month as much as ever, which is saying a good deal. His tone is smooth and easy, his phrasing clear, and he possesses a sort of classic restraint, not devoid of feeling, that is most attractive. Of the two records I prefer X.9711, where the music is on a higher plane than in X.9695; indeed, the two pieces on this latter disc are not worthy of the attention of a man like Bliss. In the matter of reproduction the company serves him well; a bad scratch at the very beginning of the *Madrigal* was the only blemish I noticed, and even this was probably peculiar to my pressing. There is a rumour—the vaguest of rumours—that we may shortly be able to hear this artist in a major work. I hope this is true; I am not, I am sure, the only one who has long desired to hear Bliss in music that gives him a real opportunity to show what he can do.

ORGAN.

H.M.V.—C.1237 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—**C. Whitaker-Wilson:** *Largo* (Handel) and *Gatty Sellars: The Lost Chord* (Sullivan).

Neither of these two well-worn favourites are played in a way that will appeal to the purists; but the record serves very well to show what an advance has been made recently in the reproduction of the organ. The diapason tone in the *Largo* is rounder and fuller than I had ever believed possible on the gramophone, and on one of the new H.M.V. models the 16 ft. pedal effect comes off excellently. The reed accompaniment to the beginning of *The Lost Chord* is not so good, but I fancy the organist's registration left something to be desired here. And now will the companies please give us some Bach?

PETER LATHAM.

OPERATIC

MICHAEL BOHNEN (baritone).—*Wotan's Abschied* and *Der Augen leuchtendes Paar* from *Walküre* (Wagner). Polydor 85277, 12in., 6s. 9d.

ROBERT BURG (baritone).—*Leb wohl du Kühnes herrliches Kind* and *Der Augen leuchtendes Paar* from *Walküre* (Wagner). Parlophone E.10409, 12in., 4s. 6d.

FRITZI JOKL (soprano).—*Mit starrem Angesicht* from Act I., *Lasst ab mit Fragen* from Act IV. of *Un Ballo in Maschera* (Verdi) and *Titania ist Herabgestiegen* (*I am Titania*) from *Mignon* (Thomas). Parlophone E.10410, 12in., 4s. 6d.

EMMY HECKMANN-BETTENDORF (soprano).—*Mein Herr, was dachten Sie von mir* and *Czardas* from *Die Fledermaus* (Johann Strauss). Parlophone E.10411, 12in., 4s. 6d.

LUELLA PAIKIN (soprano).—*Non so più cosa son, cosa faccio* from *Nozze di Figaro* (Mozart) and *Je veux vivre* (Waltz Song) from *Roméo et Juliette* (Gounod). Vocalion A.0251, 12in., 5s. 6d.

RICHARD MAYR (bass).—*Hier im ird'schen Jammertal* from *Freischütz* (Weber) and *Porterlied* from *Martha* (Flötow). Polydor 62389, 12in., 5s. 9d.

JENNY SONNENBERG (contralto).—*Il mio core* from *Orfeo ed Euridice* (Haydn) and *When I am laid in earth* from *Dido and Aeneas* (Purcell). Polydor 66083, 12in., 5s. 9d.

ARMAND TOKATYAN (tenor).—*Amor ti vieta di non amar* from *Fedora* (Giordano) and *Siciliana* from *Cavalleria Rusticana* (Mascagni). Vocalion B.3121, 10in., 4s.

KATHLEEN DESTOURNEL (soprano) and **FRANK TITTERTON** (tenor).—*Lovely maiden in the Moonlight* from *La Bohème* (Puccini). **DESTOURNEL** and **HARDY WILLIAMSON** (tenor): *Dear love of mine* from *Nadeshda* (Goring Thomas). Vocalion K.05213, 12in., 4s. 6d.

GÖTA LJUNGBERG (soprano).—*Dich teure Halle* from *Tannhäuser* (Wagner) and *Elsa's Gesang an die Lüfte* from *Lohengrin* (Wagner). H.M.V., D.A.724, 10in., 6s.

M. MURRAY-DAVEY (bass).—*Nonnes qui reposez* from *Robert le Diable* (Meyerbeer) and *Si la rigueur* from *La Juive* (Halévy). Vocalion A.0254, 12in., 5s. 6d.

ROY HENDERSON (baritone).—*Duet from Act II., Scene I, of Falstaff* (Verdi). Vocalion K.05205, 05206, 12in., 4s. 6d. each.

RICCARDO STRACCIARI (baritone).—*Su questi Rose and Canzone della Pulce* from *La Dannazione di Faust* (Berlioz). Columbia X.333, 10in., 6s.

HAROLD WILLIAMS (baritone).—*Prologue* from *Pagliacci* (Leoncavallo). Two parts. Columbia 3843, 10in., 3s.

MIRIAM LICETTE (soprano).—*Vissi d'Arte* (Love and Music) from *La Tosca* (Verdi) and *Elisabeth's Prayer* from *Tannhäuser* (Wagner). Columbia L.1706, 12in., 6s. 6d.

ULYSSES LAPPAS (tenor).—*My love, get married* and *Old Demos* (Greek folk songs). Columbia L.1703, 12in., 6s. 6d.

Michael Bohnen.—It is probable that the name of this distinguished German baritone will appear before long in the list of artists who sing at Covent Garden. In other words, it will be possible for us then to appraise his vocal qualifications in the flesh, which is even more reliable than through the medium of a gramophone record. Meanwhile, judging by the latter, it seems to me that he possesses an organ of exceptional beauty and that he is an extremely fine artist; but, *nous verrons!* His latest Polydor record is Wotan's wonderful closing scene from *Die Walküre*, complete on two sides of the disc, and on the whole given with a better handling of the instrumentation than Berlin sends out as a rule. For sheer vocal artistry the *Abschied* is superior to the second part, *Der Augen leuchtendes Paar*, which is marred by excessive inclination to "scoop" and yet the conclusion reflects with admirable truth the paternal sentiment and poignant sorrow of the impotent god, as his farewell to Brünnhilde dies away into silence. The record is certainly well worth having.

Robert Burg.—Here is the same selection from an artist with a more powerful voice, who doubtless makes a telling if truculent Wotan in the theatre, but a more brutal one than Bohnen's in his scolding of the disobedient Valkyrie. Here, too, we perceive the characteristic Wagnerian training in accent and declamation, coming down on every syllable like a sledge-hammer. He relents somewhat towards the end, or maybe it is rather self-pity than a forgiving spirit that moves him. Anyhow, he expresses himself in a rich nasal tone that would travel miles and overcome any ordinary orchestra, more especially if the sounds of the latter were blurred, as they are in the present instance. Altogether, though, a typical Teutonic and authentic rendering.

Fritzi Jokl.—This young soprano appears to have succeeded her famous namesake, Fritzi Scheff, as the popular *soubrette* of grand opera. Here she is, to begin with, the Page of the *Ballo in Maschera*, and includes his two short airs on one side of the disc. Her staccato method and pretty tone suit them very well, while her enunciation is excellent. Miss Jokl is, however, somewhat overweighted in the *Titania* air from *Mignon* (reverse side), wherein there is a good deal of "blasting" and the voice lacks brilliancy. Her vocalisation has a curious Hungarian flavour and is not always remarkable for its accuracy. The shake is good and the cadenza effective, but on the whole I should not call it a satisfactory performance of the air.

Emmy Bettendorf.—Neither in the preceding examples nor in these two numbers from *Die Fledermaus* can it be said that the Parlophone recording shows off the singer to real advantage. The voices sound distinctly dull. I am familiar enough with

Emmy Bettendorf's work to know that she is a first-rate gramophone artist, and it is not her fault, I fancy, that these delightful excerpts from the masterpiece of the immortal Johann should not be of finer texture than they are. Otherwise the rendering of the *Mein Herr, was dachten Sie* is extremely spirited and that of the *Czardás* duly sentimental and lively by turns. In fact, they are sung as they ought to be sung.

Luella Paikin.—There is nothing distinctive in style or character about the treatment of these oddly-contrasted solos. In each one finds a faithful replica of the Tetrassini method, but without either the impulse or the spontaneity of the older singer. The waltz-air from *Roméo et Juliette*, sung in French, is neatly phrased; but the *Non so più* lacks rhythmic energy and suggests a rather doleful, lackadaisical Cherubino.

Richard Mayr.—The two most popular drinking-songs in German opera, sung by our talented friend the Baron Ochs von Lerchenau, of *Rosenkavalier* fame, ought to be a real attraction to his English admirers. The Baron in this case is that fine artist, Herr Richard Mayr, to whom evidently the Plunkett of *Martha* and the Caspar of *Freischütz* are long-standing associates. It is pleasant to hear the old melodies so splendidly sung.

Jenny Sonnenberg.—The foreign singer who would do justice to Purcell needs a command of the pure English style that is rarely heard nowadays. This one, a mezzo-soprano described as a contralto, has a pleasing voice and knows our language, but not the peculiar Purcell touch. For the rest, she takes *When I am laid in earth* too fast and imbues it with too little dignity of utterance. She is heard to much better advantage, even though her sympathetic tone is apt to tremble, in the air *Il (not Del) mio core*, from Haydn's opera, *Orfeo ed Euridice*, which was written in London and performed at the Haymarket Theatre in 1793, the score being taken away to Germany by the composer and never published here. It is a charming old aria, nevertheless, and writ Haydn all over.

Armand Tokatyan.—I like this tenor better in these pieces from *Fedora* and *Cavalleria* than I did in his previous attempts. His style is up-to-date Italian and, but for a vibrato, his bright, resonant voice would be as well worth hearing in opera as many another.

Kathleen Destournel, Hardy Williamson, Frank Titterton.—The duet from the last act of Goring Thomas's beautiful opera, *Nadeshda*, is smoothly sung, with the usual cut, for it is very long. That from the first act of *La Bohème* (reverse side) is also an adequate and agreeable bit of work.

Göta Ljungberg.—Creditable vocal examples of the most familiar soprano pieces in *Lohengrin* and *Tannhäuser*, but by no means perfectly accompanied.

Murray Davey.—This well-known bass has done good work for the Vocalion by adding to their repertory two worthy examples of Meyerbeer and Halévy—the evocation of the nuns in *Robert le Diable*, and the famous air for the Cardinal from *La Juive*. Both are capably sung in French, and the vibrant basso timbre, if a trifle monotonous in colour, is admirably suited to the music.

Roy Henderson.—An ambitious *tour de force* is embodied here, in an endeavour to reproduce (on two 12in. discs) by a single voice, with orchestral accompaniment, the long duet between Falstaff and Ford from the second act of Verdi's ultimate opera. The effect of it is to make manifest that Mr. Henderson might prove an excellent representative of either personage, but that he cannot, on the gramophone, satisfactorily delineate both. His declamation is improving, so is his diction; and he employs his fine voice without stint everywhere during the lengthy scene, which, I may add, is divided into four parts and sung in English. But neither sense of character nor the most intelligent changes of manner can enable the singer to depict for us the separate and distinct personalities that are required here. They sound too much like the same man; nor can Ford's frequent Mephistophelean laugh persuade us—and it is very frequent—that he is not himself another Falstaff in disguise.

Riccardo Stracciari.—Of the Columbia novelties for the month which follow, this is by far the most interesting. Berlioz's *Damnation de Faust* is now in the regular operatic repertory in Italy and America; hence these splendid records of two of Mephistopheles' solos, one from the chorus of sylphs whilst Faust lies sleeping, the other the *Song of the Flea*. Both are sung in Italian, the former in the languid manner dictated by the music, the latter with equally fitting alertness and spirit. Voice and orchestra alike come out perfectly.

Harold Williams.—A capital English rendering of the sempiternal *Prologue to Pagliacci*, with dark vowels but clear articulation and a broad, genial tone. The feeling is sincere, while passion is expressed in huge sweeps of *portamento*.

Miriam Licette.—Lovers of *Elizabeth's Prayer* and *Vissi d'Arte* who do not object to a little *vibrato* occasionally, will enjoy Mme. Licette's artistic rendering of both. She always sings sweetly, though one wishes that her English consonants came out more strongly.

Ulysses Lappas.—Greek folk-songs given in the original tongue by a popular Greek tenor. Excellent combination, truly. The tunes in minor mood and the language have a curiously Russian twang, and sound quite modern; still, they are all Greek to me! That "augmented" high note ending each stanza of *Old Demos* has an extraordinary effect, and Lappas sings it superbly. *My love, get married!* is a strange lament, more redolent of misery than joy.

HERMAN KLEIN.

SONGS

H.M.V.—**Enrico Caruso** (tenor): *Sultanto a te* (Only for you) (Salvatore Fucito) and *Vaghissima Sembianza* (A vague resemblance) (Stefano Donaudy). D.A.754 (10in., 6s.).

Elena Gerhardt (mezzo-soprano): *Verborgenheit* (Secrecy, from *Mörke-Lieder*, Vol. I.) (Hugo Wolf), and *Auf dem grünen Balkon* (At her green lattice-window, from *Spanish Lieder*, Vol. II.) (Wolf). D.A.715 (10in., 6s.).

Anne Thursfield (soprano) with piano accompaniment by Gerald Moore: *Cradle Song* and *Rann of Exile* (Nos. 1 and 2 of *Three Irish Songs* by Arnold Bax). E.410 (10in., 4s. 6d.).

George Baker (baritone): *It was a lover and his lass* (Morley), *To Anthea* (Hatton), and *False Phyllis* (arr. Lane Wilson). B.2207 (10in., 3s.).

George Baker (baritone): *When we were very young* (A. A. Milne and H. Fraser Simson). B.2220-2 (three 10in., 3s. each).

Paul Robeson (bass): *Steal away* (Negro Spiritual, arr. Lawrence Brown) and *Water boy* (Convict Song, arr. A. Robson). B.2187 (10in., 3s.).

Mavis Bennett (soprano): *Solveig's Song* (Grieg's *Peer Gynt*) and (with flute obbligato) *Lo, here the gentle lark* (Bishop) C.1229 (12in., 4s. 6d.).

Giovanni Martinelli (tenor), singing in Neapolitan, with orchestra: *Nina* (F. Tanara) and *Torna a surriento* (E. de Curtis). D.A.740 (10in., 6s.).

John Turner (tenor): *In an old-fashioned town* (W. H. Squire) and *Wait* (G. d'Hardelot). B.2205 (10in., 3s.).

De Reszke Singers: *The Fanard Grove* and *Next Market Day* (Herbert Hughes). E.408 (10in., 4s. 6d.).

Gresham Singers with orchestra: *Come to the fair* (Easthope Martin's *Songs of the Fair*) and *The clock is playing* (P. Blaauw). B.2233 (10in., 3s.).

VOCALION.—**Vladimir Rosing** (tenor): *Everybody says "You're a fool"* and *I'm a plucky chap* (Balakiref) and *Gathering mushrooms* (Moussorgsky). B. 3122 (10in., 4s.).

Watcyn Watcyns (bass-baritone), with the Aeolian Orchestra: *Songs of the Sea* (C. V. Stanford); *Drake's Drum*, *Outward Bound* and *Devon, O Devon*; *Homeward Bound* and *The Old Superb*. K.05211-2 (two 12in., 4s. 6d. each).

John Mathewson (baritone), with piano accompaniment by George Short: *The road to the Isles* (from *Songs of the Hebrides*, collected and arranged by M. Kennedy-Fraser) and *My Nannie O'* (arr. G. Short). X.9687 (10in., 3s.).

Malcolm McEachern (bass), with piano accompaniment by Stanley Chapple: *Pagan* (H. Löhr) and *Christ in Flanders* (Ward-Stephens). X.9708 (10in., 3s.).

Victor Carne (tenor), with piano accompaniment by Stanley Chapple: *Drink to me only with thine eyes* (arr. R. Quilter) and *For ever and for ever* (Tosti). X.9710 (10in., 3s.).

Phyllis Archibald (contralto), with piano accompaniment by Stanley Chapple: *Trees* (Oscar Rasbach) and *My Ships* (Barratt). X.9709 (10in., 3s.).

John Mathewson (baritone), with piano accompaniment by George Short: *My Nannie's Awa'* (arr. G. Short) and *My love, she's but a lassie yet* (arr. G. Short). X.9686 (10in., 3s.).

Horace Stevens (bass-baritone), with piano accompaniment by Stanley Chapple: *The vagabond* and *The roadside fire* (Vaughan Williams's *Songs of Travel*). X.9693 (10in., 3s.).

Enid Cruickshank (contralto): *On wings of song* (Mendelssohn) and *The minstrel boy* (arr. Moore). X. 9694 (10in., 3s.).

Malcolm McEachern (bass) with orchestra: *One of the guards* (Howard Fisher) and *Come to the cook-house door* (W. Charles). K.05208 (12in., 4s. 6d.).

Kathleen Destournel (soprano): *Love the pedlar* (Edward German) and *Beloved, it is morn* (Florence Aylward). K.05207 (12in., 4s. 6d.).

ACO.—**John Thorne** (baritone) and **Male Trio**, with piano accompaniment: *Sea Shanties: What shall we do with a drunken sailor and Johnny come down to Hilo* (arr. Sir R. R. Terry), and *The chanty-man's song and Can't you dance the polka?* (arr. Dr. Tozer). G.15870 (10in., 2s. 6d.).

John Thorne (baritone) and **Male Quartet**: *Massa's in the cold, cold ground* (Foster Sutton) and *Doan ye cry, ma honey* (Roll-Southy). G.15849 (10in., 2s. 6d.).

John Thorne (baritone): *The Emigrant* (Graham Peel) and *The Leather Bottel* (arr. Clutsam). G.15848 (10in., 2s. 6d.).

COLUMBIA.—**Edgar Coyle** (baritone): *Eleanore* (Coleridge-Taylor) and *A memory* (*The Kiss*) (Goring Thomas). 9070 (12in., 4s. 6d.).

Kedroff Male Quartette, singing in Russian: *Ilia Murometz* (Old Russian Folk Ballad, arr. N. Kedroff) and *Sérénade Mélancholique* (Marshner). D.1534 (10in., 4s. 6d.).

Dame Clara Butt (contralto): *Down by the riverside I stray* (J. R. Thomas) and *The leaves and the wind* (Leoni). X.329 (10in., 6s.).

W. F. Watt (tenor), with orchestra: *The heather glen* (Esposito) and *The land of Gra-ma-chree* (Barnes). 3842 (10in., 3s.).

William Heseltine (tenor) with orchestra: *The hour* (Kahn) and *Lolita* (Buzzi-Peccia). 3841 (10in., 3s.).

Carrie Herwin (contralto), with orchestra: *My ain folk* (Lemon) and *When you come home* (Squire). 9071 (12in., 4s. 6d.).

POLYDOR.—**Sigrid Onegin** (contralto): *Frühlingsnacht* (Robert Schumann) and *Ins Freie* (F. Schumann). 70638 (10in., 5s.).

BELTONE.—**Catherine Stewart** (contralto), piano accompaniment by Ethel Attwood: *Linden Lea* (R. Vaughan Williams) and *Weep you no more* (Roger Quilter). 6031 (10in., 3s.).

Idris Daniels (baritone): *Passing by* (Purcell) and *A ballad of Glyndwr's Rising* (E. T. Davies). 6029 (10in., 3s.).

Herbert Thorpe (tenor): *Hamely Scots Melodies* (R. G. Hill) and *Bonnie Scotland calls you* (R. G. Hill). 6028 (10in., 3s.).

Winifred Brady (soprano), with piano accompaniment and violin obbligato: *She is far from the land* (Lambert) and *My dark Rosaleen* (A. A. Needham). 6026 (10in., 3s.).

Jean Summers (soprano), with piano and flute obbligato: *The captive lark* (Landon Ronald) and *By the waters of Minnetonka* (Lieurance). 6030 (10in., 3s.).

H.M.V. send a *Caruso* record. As an example of the less florid, emotional Italian style it is probably unsurpassed. Neither of the two songs is of great musical value. There are certain things which we generally condemn as offences against clean singing. Such are scoopings, and superfluous neutral vowel sounds before or after exaggerated consonants, all of which abound on this record. There is occasional pleasing subtlety in *Sultanto a te*, but very little in the other song. The tone is, I believe, reproduced with absolute truth on the new H.M.V. instrument with a Columbia soft

needle. I cannot, unfortunately, claim to have heard Caruso at first hand, but I am not conscious of making any allowance for the medium. There is, I think, little or no forcing in the singing, and if you listen only to the flood of tone you will find it superb.

Any attempt at criticising *Elena Gerhardt* is, of course, based on a standard of perfection. By that standard I feel a little disappointed in the favourite *Verborgtheit*. There seems a slight sense of effort, which, even if a possible reading of the poem, is to me ruled out by the music. And, though the song has a broken character, a little more smoothness would surely be welcome. The other song is treated rather freely and is not Wolf at his very best. *Elena Gerhardt's* vibrato is still noticeable.

Anne Thursfield always avoids the hackneyed, and her second gramophone record is specially interesting. Her voice has a quite distinctive but dangerous quality, which needs very careful treatment. She fully realises the wonderful climax in *Padraig Colum's Cradle Song*, and does full justice to the whole of the *Rann of Exile*. The accompaniments (which really demand some instruments other than or besides the piano) are splendidly played.

The exhilaration of *George Baker's* three old English songs disarms most criticism. There is a slight tendency to exaggerate final consonants, and towards an excessive adaptation of even notes to the rhythm of the words. If anyone has not yet fallen in love with those irresistible, tiny songs, *When we were very young*, he will surely succumb to *George Baker's* three records of them.

Paul Robeson gives another very beautiful record. *Water Boy* is specially striking—a slight variation from the Negro Spiritual type, of which, however, *Steal Away* is one of the most beautiful. *Mavis Bennett's* second record is more worthy of her than her first, but she still has not troubled to do herself anything like full justice. *Solveig's Song* is, I feel, not nearly simple enough. For sheer sound *Martinelli's* record is magnificent, but for little else. *Turner's* record will be welcomed by those who admire his two songs. *Next market day* is about the most exciting male-voice part-song I know, and *The Fanard Grove* is a worthy companion. The *Gresham Singers* record is an absolute necessity for times when you feel like going to the Coliseum and can't get there.

Rosing's fine Russian songs have already been issued on single-sided discs. The most notable of the other January *Vocalion* records (which arrived too late to be reviewed last month) are the *Songs of the Sea*. The weakest point in the recording is the orchestra; this is very fair, but tends to be opaque and, occasionally, ragged. My greatest grievance, however, is that the chorus has been omitted—a practice which has the composer's sanction, but would hardly have pleased him in what is supposed to be a permanent record of the work. The other five are good performances and reproductions. Musically the best are *John Mathewson's*. *Victor Carne's* first record promises great things.

Two of *Vaughan Williams's Songs of Travel*, well sung, deserve a high place. *Horace Steven's* full-toned voice makes much of *The Vagabond*. It is not quite, perhaps, so well suited to *The Roadside Fire*. His interpretation gives very fair pleasure. But outstanding is the piano part, misnamed accompaniment, which is played in masterly fashion, and almost makes the songs.

Enid Cruickshank follows up her good first record with *On Wings of Song* and *The Minstrel Boy*. These are good, but not specially distinguished, and there begin to appear slight tendencies towards undesirable vibrato and indistinctness of diction, the second of these tendencies being due, I suspect, to the fullness of her tone.

McEachern's record is, once more, vocally gorgeous, musically insignificant. Again, *Kathleen Destounel* can (and does) do full justice to the two songs she sings here—and to a great deal more.

The highest compliment that occurs to me for this month's half-crown *Sea Shanties* record (*John Thorne* and *Male Trio*) is the statement of the plain fact that the jaded reviewer removes it from his instrument with the greatest reluctance. Their record of the two familiar plantation songs has decided imperfections, but they are not enough to spoil it. *John Thorne* gives us a very fair record of a typical *Graham Peel* and of the lively old *Leather Bottel*.

Edgar Coyle's interpretation of *Eleanore* to me lacks warmth. This may be a matter of personal taste; this record may be ideal for some people. The *Kedroff Male Quartette* are very impressive; *Kedroff's* arrangement of a folk-ballad is specially striking. Is this recording of *Dame Clara Butt* faulty? There is a good deal of booming and some jarring. *The Heather Glen* has good spirits and piquant orchestration. Anyone who is looking for records of

the songs that *Heseltine* and *Carrie Herwin* give us will find these good, except that both singers are very unsteady.

In *Schumann's* glorious *Spring Night* I feel that the pianist realises the great irresistible drive of the song, but that *Sigrid Onegin* is almost continuously pulling it up. But it is conceivable that many people, only too eager for a record of the song, will find that this one satisfies them. Moreover, *Ins Freie* (by another *Schumann*, but almost worthy of Robert's best vein), is almost entirely pleasing, though here again the "all-through" feeling is not perfect.

Here is another record of *Vaughan Williams's* quasi-folk-song, *Linden Lea*, from *Beltona*. There is no charm in its interpretation, which unjustly makes the song sound rather ordinary. And diction, which is a first necessity in such a song as this, is bad. But a very fair recording (the first?) of *Quilter's Weep you no more*, on the reverse, is an attraction. *Idris Daniels* has a very good baritone voice, and his use of it is far above the average. That immensely popular dainty, *Passing by*, could hardly be sung better, and the *Ballad of Glyndwr's Rising* is sung with such variety and real feeling that one is made to doubt whether to condemn or praise the song. The other *Beltonas* are, as usual, very fair recordings of songs which may appeal to individuals, but do not call for comment. *Winifred Brady's* unsteadiness is as bad as ever, and *Jean Summers* joins her in that fault.

C. M. C.

CHORAL RECORDS

HIS MASTER'S VOICE.

D.1047 (12in., 6s. 6d.).—*Symphony Orchestra and Chorus*, conducted by *Coates*: *Kermesse from Faust* (Gounod) and *March from Carmen*, Act 4 (Bizet).

D.1057 (12in., 6s. 6d.).—*Royal Choral Society*, conducted by *H. L. Balfour*: *Worthy is the Lamb* and *Lift up your heads* from *Messiah* (Handel).

E.407 (10in., 4s. 6d.).—*Glasgow Orpheus Choir*, conducted by *H. Robertson*: *Summer is gone* (Coleridge-Taylor) and *Cargoes* (Balfour Gardiner).

One of the greatest lacks in the whole gramophone realm for years was fine choral recording. Now new methods allow a good-sized choir to be recorded, and the output of choral works is going up. Already, besides *Handel*, we have a bit of *Bax* and *Purcell*. *Bach* will surely follow soon. The *Mass* is being done, I believe. (The *Bach* work recorded last month is not, it is pretty sure, *J. S. B.'s*.) The best of the old records were the madrigals, but there we had not actually a choir. The chief trouble now is to get the right balance for recording. What looks right on paper, and sounds right in the concert room, may not "come off" half so well on the disc. Orchestral instruments differ from each other so much that they can be made to pull their proper weight and sound well individually and blend homogeneously. Choir people sound too much alike to record so well, I think, and I seem to find the reinforcement of the men's resonance excessive, compared with that of the women. The *Bax* piece recorded recently was not really good. But was that the choir's fault, the conductor's, or the record's? I am told by those who heard *Coates's* performance at *Leeds* that he didn't get the parts out any more clearly than we have them on the record.

There will be fascinating work for the directors of recording in finding how to bring out a just balance of tone. So long as they experiment sufficiently widely we shall none of us, I am sure, be too severe on any present defects.

The *Kermesse* scene from *Faust* (Act 2) is that in which *Faust* and *Marguerite* first meet. The soldiers begin with a song, in which a good baritone puts in a few phrases. Their words are not clear here, but their tone is fairly good. The girls follow, and the whole thing is carried off distinctly well, the crowd's singing being full bodied, but not too well in tune towards the end. 'Twas a small thing, but 'twas *Gounod's* own. The *Carmen* extract is taken at a swinging pace. The *March* brings in the *toreadors*, and *Escamillo*. The singing in both pieces is of good stage quality—better than the average, indeed. The orchestra, as usual with the new recording in loud pieces, reminds one a little too forcibly of a fair-ground organ. It is a blessing that the new method does not distort the vocal tone to anything like the same extent as that of the strings.

Before trying the new H.M.V. *Lift up* I put on their old one (D.780, unnamed choir and R.A.H. Orchestra). The comparison is striking. The increase of volume is remarkable, and yet the smaller body has a vitality that the larger does not show, in spite of the very lively pace Mr. Balfour sets—too lively, I feel. The Royal Choral is a big, unwieldy force of 800. Detail does not much concern it. The semiquavers after dotted quavers (proportion, a quarter to three-quarters) are nearly always too long. The men are weak, and so are the altos. The divided sopranos are much more powerful than the undivided altos, here. (Pity poor Handel, by the way; he had more nearly equal forces of singers and players; nowadays 80 play while 800 sing). *Worthy* is a better piece of work, though climax is wanting. One or two of the runs are unclear, but the effect, on the whole, is good. There is a little echo (the performance being recorded in the Albert Hall).

The Orpheus Choir's record is remarkably pure in tone—more so, I think, than any other I have heard. Medium power evidently records well. Warmth of colour is not pronounced in the Coleridge-Taylor piece. In the Gardiner triptych (Masefield's words) the contrasts are admirably done, but the melodic line is not always perfectly clear. A slight re-arrangement of the balance of parts would probably be worth while for recording purposes. The bass is a trifle light, apparently. The poise and purpose of this choir's singing is always enjoyable. It steers clear of virtuosity for its own sake, while having up its sleeve all the crack choir's capacity to astonish, if it wanted to. May I beg for Stanford's exquisite *Blue Bird* as one piece for early recording? It is one of the loveliest part-songs in existence, and the Orpheus sing it like angels.

We shall probably get the best results from a choir of from 50 to 250, according to the nature of the work. Dr. Whittaker's Newcastle Bach Choir does eight-part things with five a-side—a choir of forty only. This is virtuosity. Handel has too long laboured under the big battalions. Cut down the Royal Choral (it is by far our biggest regular choir) by two-thirds, and you have a far better force to work with. Above all, flee that dreadful Albert Hall! The choice of recording voices must be a matter for special care, too. Some of the Leeds singers had too much tang in the recorded tone. Is power desired, in some of our fine Northern choirs, above subtlety? I have heard a good many lately, and I fear for their sweetness, sometimes.

Your average recording room is not, I think, at present ideal for choralism. Consider the weaknesses of most concert halls. They do nothing to break up, and everything to make, echoes.

The balance of power that suits the public performance may not be fitted for good record-making. No one can as yet say with certainty, but I feel, after hearing the half dozen varieties of recent choral recording, that here is a point that needs careful watching. There are others, too, not mentioned above. That question of the conductor, for instance, needs a lot of care. All who love good choralism have some great times in store. I for one shall look forward eagerly to the next year's issues.

K. K.

MISCELLANEOUS RECORDS

In the lower realms of music the best records seem every month to be importations from America, and if Jack Smith's record last month took the honours this time he must yield to **The Revellers** (male and very American voices, H.M.V., B.2236, 3s.), whose *Oh, Miss Hannah* and *Collegiate* are most remarkable specimens of singing and recording. Next to this, perhaps, comes Jack Smith's *Cecilia* (H.M.V., B.2226, 3s.), which is sung with exquisite rhythm; but *I care for her* on the other side makes this record less satisfying than *Knee-deep in daisies* and *Feeling kind o' blue* last month. Similarly **Art Gillham** is not quite so good in *How's your folks and my folks?* and *Angry* (Col. 3855, 3s.) as he was in *I had someone else*; but he is pretty good. Then there is **Sophie Tucker**, hitherto only available on Parlophones, now appearing on H.M.V. (B.2223, 3s.) in *Nobody knows what a red-head mamma can do* (who is the Indian chief in the last phrase?) and *Me and myself*, her two greatest successes, with droll stridency; and **Layton and Johnstone** in their first "improved process" recordings—*Waiting for the Moon* and *Every Sunday afternoon* (Col. 3856, 3s.) and *My Pal Harry* and *I wonder where my baby is to-night* (Col. 3857, 3s.). The realism is astonishing, and both records must be bought, as the two best songs are separated! **George Robey** has also tried

the new recording, and is as clear and emphatic as if you were in the front row of the stalls (Col. 3854, 3s.).

Of the twenty or thirty other records of popular songs that I have been through, I have put aside the following:—**Scovel and Wheldon** in *Give three cheers for the dustman* and *The tale of a guinea-pig* from *The Co-Optimists* (Parlo. E.5529, 2s. 6d.); **Robert English** in *Bam, Bam, Bammy Shore* and *Brown eyes, why are you blue?* (Parlo. E.5527, 2s. 6d.); **Billy Desmond** in *Babette* and *I'm happy when alone* (Aco. G.15879, 2s. 6d.) and in *I want you to want me* and *By the light of the stars* (Aco. G.15880, 2s. 6d.); and **Cyril Newton** in *Wondering* and *When you and I were seventeen* (H.M.V., B.2234, 3s.). All these are good performances, but only to be bought after acquiring some of those mentioned in the first paragraph.

Of restaurant music there are several very good records to mention this month. Any one of them is worth buying if you want that sort of record. The **Salon Orchestra** is best, in *By the light of the stars* and *You forgot to remember* (H.M.V., B.2225, 3s.), or in *When you and I were seventeen* and *Oh, how I miss you to-night* (H.M.V., B.2235, 3s.). **De Groot** is at his best in *Babette* and *L'Amour, toujours l'amour* (H.M.V., B.2224, 3s.); and **Moschetto** plays the *Ay, ay, ay* which one connects with Fleta's voice, and *Une heure d'Amour* (Voc. X.9712, 3s.) with distinction, and **Toselli's** *Second Serenade* with *Sometime* (on Voc. X.9697, 3s.) equally well. A slight faultiness of intonation occasionally mars the very pleasant playing of this orchestra, but not enough to spoil the record.

Betty in Mayfair is a very different affair from *Mercenary Mary*. The moment I saw it I knew that we should get better gramophone records of it; the tunes and the lyrics and the singers are all worthy of being recorded. Columbia justifies this impression with a 12in. Selection (Col. 9069, 4s. 6d.) and five 10in. records of solos and duets, all made by the original artists and the Adelphi Theatre Orchestra conducted by Charles Prentice, "under the personal supervision of the composer," H. Fraser Simson. I cannot quite understand why Miss Laye was not induced to make perfect records in all cases, notably in *Dreamland lover* (3837), which is just marred by two notes. Otherwise her singing is quite charming. The gramophone, as so often happens, betrays the essential crudeness of Miss Mary Leigh's singing, but Jack Hobbs is excellent and Arthur Margetson adequate. I recommend especially the Selection and *In June* and *The countryside* (3836, 3s.) and 3838, two duets, *I love you* and *Love*. But the others, 3835, 3837, and 3839, are also good; and as for the Selections, the H.M.V. version (C.1236, 4s. 6d.), played by the Savoy Orpheans is so crisp and good that there is little if anything to choose between them.

Columbia (9072, 4s. 6d.) continues the series of the "Vocal Gem Chorus" with *No, No, Nanette*, full of life and pace—a capital record of its kind but exemplifying, as usual, the preponderance of the male voices in the new process of recording. There is also a very good selection from *Tell me more*, by the Sutherland Orchestra on Beltona 912 (2s. 6d.).

I cannot hope to do justice to the "querulous monotony" of **Palakiko and Paaluki** (Brunswick 2918, 3s.) and of **Palala's Hawaiians** (Voc. X.9698, 3s.), and would cry "Hawaii with them," but they must have a large following, and their playing has the inevitability of all great art (and rotten tunes). Nor does the stupendous virtuosity of **Pietro Capodiferro** on the cornet (Aco. G.15852, 2s. 6d.) in *Columbia* and *Souvenir of Switzerland* move me more than a good joke in doubtful taste or **Eddie Peabody's** banjo version of the *Sextet* from *Lucia* last month. This time the latter is heard (Imperial 1535, 2s.) in *Cecilia* and *Paddelin' Madelin' home*, which are more his mark. **Earl Collins**, however, with his ukulele (Voc. X.9713, 3s.) sings *That's why I love the moon* and *You were a wild rose* with an amiable simplicity which suits the witless words.

Ben Lawes (H.M.V., C.1232, 4s. 6d.) is more tiresome and cheerful than ever in *Folk songs*; **Joe Hayman** (Aco. G.15878, 2s. 6d.) in *Cohen still phoning his builder* has shattered a memory of his being extremely funny, for this is a distinctly poor effort; but **Nelson Keys** has done just the opposite. Last month I was disappointed by his record; this time, in *The tipster* and *A Spanish Affair* (Voc. X.9700, 3s.) he is extremely good, though I had to play the former side four times before I could follow the rapid discourse of the tipster. This is worth adding to the comic record album.

PEPPERING.

NEW-POOR RECORDS

ACO.—First of these I will put the very nice VIOLIN Solo by Andjelkovich, of *Träumerei* (2s. 6d.), then the ORCHESTRAL rendering of Beethoven's *Coriolan Overture* (2s. 6d.). There is a charming rendering of *The Emigrant*, by John Thorne (2s. 6d.). PIANOFORTE: A light recording of Grieg's *To the Spring*, played by Maurice Cole (2s. 6d.).

BELTONE.—First of these, I think, is the ORCHESTRAL rendering of Coleridge Taylor's *Dream Dances* (2s. 6d.). The MILITARY BAND rendering of Leslie Paul's *Lake of Shadows* (2s. 6d.) is a good number for young people. There is the first record I have seen of the well-written new WALTZ, *Carolina Sweetheart* (2s. 6d.), and it is one that can hardly be beaten. POPULAR SONG: John Roberts makes the best record of *Babette* (2s. 6d.) I have yet heard.

DUOPHONE.—Colonel Mackenzie-Rogan's MILITARY BAND records are so happily chosen, so well rehearsed and performed, and so cleanly and yet fully recorded that they should take the handsome Duophone label on to the shelves of every good judge. This month we have Ansell's *BALLET SUITE (The Shoe)* on one disc (4s.) and on another *Oberon* and *Figaro* overtures, with the drum not omitted.

HOMOCHORD.—There is a good PIANOFORTE fox-trot, *Florida*.

IMPERIAL.—An absolutely perfect record of *The Kinky Kids Parade* (2s.) has gone into my own collection. Mr. Arthur Fields sings *Brown eyes, why are you blue?* (2s.), just in the right way.

PARLOPHONE.—There are two fine Vincent Lopez numbers, *Little Annie Rooney* and *The meanest kind of blues*, at 2s. 6d. each. Edith Lorand's ORCHESTRAL *Ballgeflüster* is just what one would expect of such an artist.

REGAL.—Manuello's VIOLIN Solos are always worth buying. This month he makes a disc with Toselli's *Serenade* one side and Pergolesi's *Nina* the other (2s. 6d.). I do not know a Kenneth Walters' record that does not satisfy me; this month his *I heard a thrush at eve* (2s. 6d.) is just what a BARITONE rendering should be.

VELVET FACE AND WINNER.—This note does not relate to this month's issue, but is general in character. When looking through the complete list the other day I was greatly surprised to see what a large number of MILITARY BANDS have been recorded in rendering really high-class music such as none of our readers would scorn to possess, and I have been to some pains to select a representative set. Here they are:—First I put the V.F. (green label) *Mars* (12in., 4s.) from Gustav Holst's *The Planets*, performed by 2LO military band, a magnificent rendering in which the drum is properly conspicuous. Next to this I put the two Wagnerian (10in., 2s. 6d.) Winners, *Rienzi* and *Rhinégold*, the first by the Royal Guards and the second by 2LO, both grand recording and showing the drums. These three records in my opinion should be in every collection. Other records that should be added to them as opportunity affords are *La Boutique Fantasque*, Scots Guards (4s.), *March of the Dwarfs*, 1st Life Guards (4s.), and the half-crown Winners, *Morning, Noon and Night*, Royal Military Band; *La Goua (Ballet Suite)*, Wembley Band; *Florodora*, Irish Guards; *Tannhäuser*, Empire Guards; *Espana*, Bohemian Band; *Scottish Suite* (Alford), bagpipes and military band of 2nd Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders.

ZONOPHONE.—The MALE VOICE QUARTETTE record, *Killarney*, sounds to me like a new style recording; it is so particularly clean and strong. The TANGO, *Batacayo*, played by Pizarro's Band, I like immensely.

ULTIMATE SELECTIONS.—ORCHESTRAL: 10in., *Coriolan* (ACO.) *Dream Dances* (BELTONE). PIANOFORTE: *Florida* (HOMO.). BARITONE: *I hear a thrush at eve* (REGAL). VIOLIN AND PIANO: *Serenade* (REGAL). MALE VOICE QUARTETTE: *Killarney* (ZONO.). POPULAR SONG: *Babette* (BELTONE). CHILDREN'S NUMBER: *Kinky Kids Parade* (IMPERIAL). TANGO: *Batacayo* (ZONO.). JAZZ: *The meanest kind of blues* (PARLO.). VIENNESE ORCHESTRA: *Ballgeflüster* (PARLO.). MILITARY BAND: 12in., *Oberon* (DUO.). The very important special selection of Velvet Face and Winner records is given in the paragraph relating to them.

* * *

I have derived very great pleasure and no little education from reading Mr. Hervey Elwes' compilation of 365 (one for each day of the year) ancient and modern "Thoughts on Music," by great writers. I have been through it twice already, another half dozen readings will not tire me. The book is easily one that might remain one's favourite odd-time companion for years. I hope every one of my friends will be able to reap the benefit of Mr. Elwes' research and labour of love.

H. T. B.

DANCE NOTES

By Richard Herbert

THE number of the records in this month's lists has again increased, and this is in spite of the fact that I have received no Actuelles, Brunswicks, or Homochords. The actual figures are: Tango, 32; Waltz, 25; Fox-trot, 103; One-step, 2. The tangos increase in number but decline in quality; the fame of the waltz is only saved by the Parlophone records; while Parlophone and Columbia carry off the chief honours in the fox-trot class.

A demand has been made to me by a correspondent that I should throw aesthetic standards overboard and judge the records merely by their adaptability to dancing—that is ultimately by their loudness. This has always been regarded by me as a point of great importance and has been one which I have kept constantly in mind in making my monthly choice of the records, but I should be very reluctant to judge by volume of sound alone. This month I have taken special care to mark those records which are extra loud, but, as it happens, my qualms on the matter in general have been allayed somewhat by the fact that the best records this month happen to be the loudest—in the fox-trot list, the Columbias and that wonderful Marek Weber. It seems that Marek Weber has changed his technique in playing fox-trots, and the change is such as cannot fail to double his popularity. This new *Tea for Two*, a paragon for all time, a giant head and shoulders above the rest, should be bought by everyone. And I strongly advise dancers to have a very good look at the Columbias, which strike me as being very much better than usual. The H.M.V.'s are disappointing; but they have had curious ups and downs lately. There are several good records among the lesser known makes.

TANGOS.

VOC. X.9719.—*Julian* and *Mal de amor* (Mario de Pietro and his Tango Band). Both these tunes are played rather faster than is customary with tangos, and they have a greater volume of sound which makes them more suitable for dancing.

H.M.V. B.2178.—*Por Ti* and *La Mantilla* (Varaldi's Tango Band). The first is certainly the best version of the tune, which is quite a good one. *La Mantilla* only falls a little short in quality.

H.M.V. B.2180.—*Garconiera* and *Tuo ojos* (Rio Grande Tango Band). Loud, as H.M.V. tangos go, and a pleasing tune.

DUO. B.5106.—*Le tango du rêve* and *Radio Tango* (The Savile Tango Band). The first is an excellent record of one of the most entrancing tunes. The second, by comparison, is negligible.

H.M.V. B.2181.—*Tango Sentimental* and *Capricho* (Rio Grande Tango Band). In both these tunes as with most of the Rio Grande tangos the bandolón comes out well.

H.M.V. B.2206.—*Adelai* and *En tus Brazos* (Rio Grande Tango Band). The first is the better of the two recordings of the tune, although a little sugary; both tunes are played quite loudly.

H.M.V. B.2179.—*Viva el Principe* and *Sunny Havana* (Varaldi's Tango Band). *Sunny Havana* does not strike me as making a good tango.

DUO. B.5109.—*Capricho* and *Sweet Carmen* (the Argentine Tango Band). This *Capricho* is very different from the H.M.V.—faster and more mellow.

VOC. X.9704.—*Alba d'amour* and *Adelai* (Geoffrey Goodhart and his Orchestra).

ZONO. 2657.—*Batacazo* and *Mariposa* (Manuel Pizarro's Argentine Orchestra).

H.M.V. B.2177.—*Mi Querer* and *Langosta* (Varaldi's Tango Band). Varaldi's Band gives me the impression of not playing smoothly enough.

ACO. 15865.—*La Mantilla* (Bidgood's Tango Orchestra) and see "Fox-trots."

H.M.V. B.2232.—*Criolella* and *Florida* (Rio Grande Tango Band).

ACO. G.15886.—*O sole mio* and *Golden Tango Girl* (Harry Bidgood and his Tango Orchestra).

VOC. X.9718.—*L'Appassionata* and *Reina del Pago* (Mario de Pietro and his Tango Band).

COL. 3853.—*Mi Chica* and *La Goya* (Bretagne Tango Orchestra).

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LATEST
DANCES

2/-
ISSUE



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Large Up-to-Date
CATALOGUE

January Supplement.

Vocals

- 1540 { Oh, Boy, What a Girl (Green-Wright-Bessinger). Tenor Solo.
Brown Eyes, Why are You Blue ? Baritone Solo.
Sung by Billy Jones.
Sung by Mr. Arthur Fields.
- 1539 { Mother Kelly's Doorstep (G. A. Stevens).
Where are You To-night ? (Conrad and Sherman).
Sung by Robert Kinnear, with Orchestral Accomp.
Sung by Chas. Bonheur, with Orchestral Accomp.
- 1538 { This Time Next Year (David, Godfrey and David).
Where does the Candle Light Go ? (J. G. Gilbert). Comedy Song.
Sung by Geo. Berry, with Orchestral Accomp.
- 1537 { Daddy (A. H. Behrend). Ballad.
Solveig's Song (Grieg). Ballad.
Sung by Miss C. Howe, with 'Cello obbligato and Piano Accompaniment.
Sung by Miss C. Howe, with 'Cello obbligato and Piano Accompaniment.
- 1530 { Why Don't My Dreams Come True ? (G. E. Patten).
Because You could have Had me Once (Glover, Marks and Bernard).
Sung by Guy Victor, with Piano Accomp. and Violin obbligato.
Sung by Chas. Bonheur, with Piano Accomp. and Violin obbligato.

Duets by Hall & Ryan and Jones & Hare ("The Happiness Boys")

- 1536 { Normandy (Robinson-Little-Britt). Sung by Hall and Ryan.
Oh, Say, Can I see You To-night ? (Creamer-Schuster-Flatow).
Sung by Jones and Hare ("The Happiness Boys").

Eddie Peabody's Banjo Records (with Vocal Chorus)

- 1535 { Paddlin' Madelin' Home (Harry Woods).
Cecilia (Dave Dreyer).
Played by Eddie Peabody.
Played by Eddie Peabody.

Dances

- 1534 { Babette (H. Nicholls). Waltz.
Carolina Sweetheart (Billy James). Waltz.
Played by Greening's Dance Orchestra. (Vocal Chorus, C. Bonheur.)
Played by Greening's Dance Orchestra. (Vocal Chorus, C. Bonheur.)
- 1533 { Brown Eyes, Why are You Blue ? Fox Trot.
The Kinky Kids Parade (Kahn-Donaldson). Fox Trot.
Played by Majestic Dance Orchestra.
Played by Imperial Dance Orchestra.
- 1532 { Oh, Boy, What a Girl (Green-Wright-Bessinger). Fox Trot.
Just a Little Drink (Gay). Fox Trot.
Played by Sam Lanin and his Orchestra. (Vocal Chorus, Arthur Fields.)
Played by Moulin Rouge Orchestra.
- 1531 { I'm an Airman (McGhee and Russell). Fox Trot.
She Showed Him This, She Showed Him That (Stone and David). Fox Trot.
Played by Greening's Dance Orchestra.
Played by Greening's Dance Orchestra.

A SUPPLEMENTARY LIST OF NEW TITLES WILL BE ISSUED MONTHLY.

Apply for particulars to the Crystalate Mfg. Co., Ltd., Town Works,
Tonbridge, Kent, the oldest makers of Disc Records in Great Britain.
London dealers should write for supplies to 63, Farringdon Road, London, E.C.

WALTZES.

- PARLO. E.5524.—**The Flowers' Dream** and **Ballgefuster** (Edith Lorand Orchestra). Both are rather quiet, but quite entrancing—in a class by themselves. The second perhaps is the more subtle tune both for its melody and for its rhythms.
- PARLO. 12in., E.10404.—**Walzer du Mein Walzer** and **Nixchen** (Marek Weber and his Famous Orchestra). Marek Weber plays almost as well as ever, particularly in the first of these tunes. In the second he imports a little of his old fox-trot jerkiness—but this, too, has lovely things in it.
- PARLO. E.5523.—**My Hawaiian Evening Star** and **Golden Memories of Hawaii** (Le Petit Salon Orchestra). I was surprised to find that the vibraphone bells did not spoil these tunes altogether. The first is really quite a gem.
- IMP. 1534.—**Carolina Sweetheart** (V.) and **Babette** (Greening's Dance Orchestra). Certainly the best is made of *Carolina Sweetheart*. Of *Babette* we are a little tired.

- VOC. X.9707.—**Campanitas de Plata** (The Castillians) and see "Fox-trots." Played slowly and with real artistry.
- DUO. B.5103.—**Take me back to your heart** and **The Prisoner's Song** (Savile Marimba Band). A marimba band—for those who like such things.
- ACO. 15862.—**Lovely lady** (Jeffries and his Rialto Orchestra) and see "Fox-trots."
- H.M.V. B.2200.—**Where can I find a girl like Mary** (Savoy Orpheans) and see "Fox-trots."
- H.M.V. B.2228.—**One stolen kiss** (Savoy Havana Band) and see "Fox-trots." Hardly up to the high standard of the Savoy Havana Band.
- BEL. 899.—**Sonar** (Southern States Dance Band) and see "Fox-trots."
- ACO. G.15884.—**Carolina Sweetheart** (Jeffries and his Rialto Orchestra) and see "Fox-trots."
- COL. 3851.—**Memory's Melody** (Bert Ralton and his Havana Band) and see "Fox-trots."
- COL. 3848.—**Love** (Percival Mackey's Band) and see "Fox-trots." Not a first-class tune—from "Betty in Mayfair" but played by a good band.
- ACO. G.15889.—**Sometime** and **Hawaiian Ripples** (Pacific Marimba Band). Another marimba band.

FOX-TROTS.

- PARLO. 12in., E.10403.—**Indian Love Call** and **Tea for two** (Marek Weber and his Famous Orchestra). First, without any hesitation. An admirable record of which one could never tire, for this version of *Tea for two* is easily the best that I have heard and *Tea for two* well played is difficult to beat.
- COL. 3850.—**Every Sunday afternoon** (V.) and **I wonder where my baby is to-night** (V.) (Percival Mackey's Band). Percival Mackey's Band is quite unrivalled for its "go", and his records for the amazing volume of sound produced without its becoming in any way offensive to listen to. The tricks are rather a pity.
- COL. 3852.—**I'm knee-deep in daisies** (V.) and **Are you sorry?** (Paul Specht and his Orchestra). Both tunes have all the good qualities for dancing, but the first misses being quite first class by the rather poor piano and vocal parts. We are glad to hear Paul Specht again, not only on account of our indebtedness to him, but because he is so jolly good.
- COL. 3849.—**The countryside** and **Dancing** (Percival Mackey's Band). Both tunes come from "Betty in Mayfair." *Dancing* is my selection from those that I have heard. The piano part is exceptionally fine and loud, as, indeed, is the whole record.
- COL. 3828.—**Who wouldn't love you?** and **Moon dear** (the Denza Dance Band). *Moon dear* is quite a lovely tune and a very melodious one.
- PARLO. 5518.—**Don't wait too long** and **Little Annie Rooney** (Vincent Lopez and his Hotel Pennsylvania Orchestra). Here we have fine orchestration, but disappointment. Vincent Lopez must not rest on his laurels.
- ACO. G.15887.—**Angry** (Washington Dance Players) and **Nobody but Fanny** (V.) (The Old Virginians). Loud, with a good volume of sound. There is no questioning the merit of the Old Virginians, but I wish they had better taste in voices.
- H.M.V. B.2231.—**Someone has taken you out of my dreams** and **Mighty blue** (Kit-Cat Band).
- ACO. G.15883.—**Sunny Havana** and **I love you** (Jeffries and his Rialto Orchestra).

- VOC. X.9720.—**If I had a girl like you** (Ben Bernie and his Hotel Roosevelt Orchestra) and **Someday we'll meet again** (the Night Club Orchestra).
- VOC. X.9721.—**I want you all for me** (the Night Club Orchestra) and **Ya! Ya! Alma!** (V.) (Ben Selvin and his Orchestra).
- PARLO. 5522.—**If you loved only me** (V.) and **The Promenade walk** (the Tickle Toe Ten).
- VOC. X.9717.—**Whose are you?** and **Don't wait too long** (V.) (Don Parker and his Band).
- PARLO. 5521.—**She's driving me wild** and **Charleston Baby of mine** (Fred Hall's Sugar Babies). **Charleston**.
- COL. 3829.—**The camel walk** and **Bam, Bam-Bamy Shore** (Ted Lewis and his Band).
- COL. 3827.—**The Promenade walk** and **Somebody's crazy about you** (the Denza Dance Band).
- ACO. G.15884.—**Ida—I do** (Jeffries and his Rialto Orchestra) and see "Waltzes."
- COL. 3851.—**Lillian** (Bert Ralton and his Havana Band) and see "Waltzes." Loudish.
- COL. 3848.—**I love you** (V.) (Percival Mackey's Band) and see "Waltzes."
- DUO. B.5110.—**Are you sorry?** and **Jimtown blues** (the Monterey Dance Band).
- DUO. B.5105.—**I'm a little bit fonder of you** and **Honey, I'm in love with you** (Ben Russell's Dance Band). Quite a good record.
- VOC. X.9701.—**Hong Kong dream girl** and **She showed him this** (V.) (Don Parker and his Dance Band). Fairly loud. This band is quite an addition.
- VOC. X.9703.—**Panama** and **Moonlight and Roses** (Newman and his Dance Band). This version of *Panama* is quite one of the best.
- VOC. X.9705.—**She was just a sailor's sweetheart** (V.) (The Ambassadors) and **Footloose** (The Tuxedo Orchestra). *Footloose* in blues time.
- VOC. X.9702.—**Bam Bam Bamy Shores** (V.) (and **You're just a flower from an old bouquet** (Don Parker and his Dance Band).
- H.M.V. B.2199.—**Oh boy! what a girl** and **Tum tum tum** (V.) (Savoy Orpheans).
- H.M.V. B.2209.—**Just around the corner** and **Everybody home is asking for you** (Jack Hylton and his Orchestra).
- ZONO. 2668.—**Save your sorrow for to-morrow** and **Pango Pango Maid** (Max Darewski's Dance Band).
- VOC. X.9707.—**My sugar** (The Night Club Orchestra) and see "Waltzes."
- ACO. 15865.—**Miami** (V.) (The Old Virginians) and see "Tangos." Very loud and eminently suitable for dancing. But oh! the voice!
- ACO. 15862.—**Paddlin' Madelin' Home** (V.) (Jeffries and his Rialto Orchestra) and see "Waltzes."
- H.M.V. B.2200.—**Good-bye Sal** (V.) (Savoy Orpheans) and see "Waltzes." Wonderful definition.
- H.M.V. B.2228.—**Everybody Stomp** (Savoy Havana Band) and see "Waltzes."
- BEL. 899.—**Valeska** (V.) (Southern States Dance Band) and see "Waltzes."
- IMP. 1533.—**The Kinky Kids Parade** (Imperial Dance Orchestra) and **Brown eyes, why are you blue?** (Majestic Dance Orchestra).
- H.M.V. B.2227.—**Ida I do** and **I would like to know why** (V.) (Savoy Havana Band).

N.B.—In the above lists the titles of all the best records are printed in heavy type (Clarendon), the titles printed above the line only in the list of each dance being in order of merit. The use of asterisks is a further effort to denote comparative merit.

When only one band is mentioned in describing a record it means that both tunes are played by the same band. (V.) after the name of a tune indicates the presence of a vocal refrain, chorus, or accompaniment. All records are 10in., unless otherwise described. The abbreviations of makers' names are obvious.

The prices of the records in the lists are as follows:—Aco.: 10in., 2s. 6d. Beltona: 10in., 2s. 6d. Columbia: 10in., 3s. Duophone: 10in., 2s. 6d. H.M.V.: 10in., 3s. Imperial: 10in., 2s. Parlophone: 12in., 4s. 6d.; 10in., 2s. 6d. Vocalion: 10in., 3s. Zonophone: 10in., 2s. 6d.